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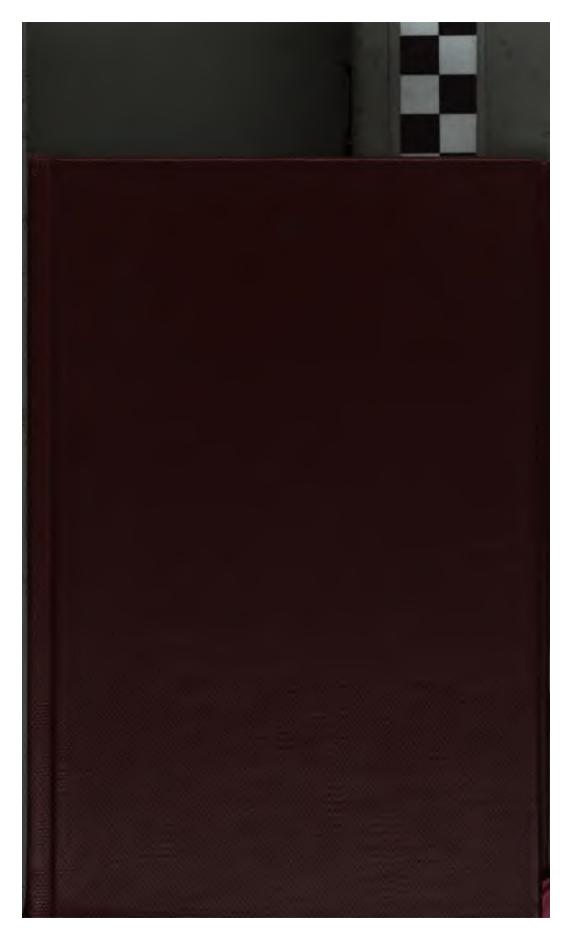
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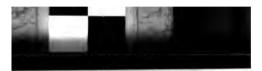
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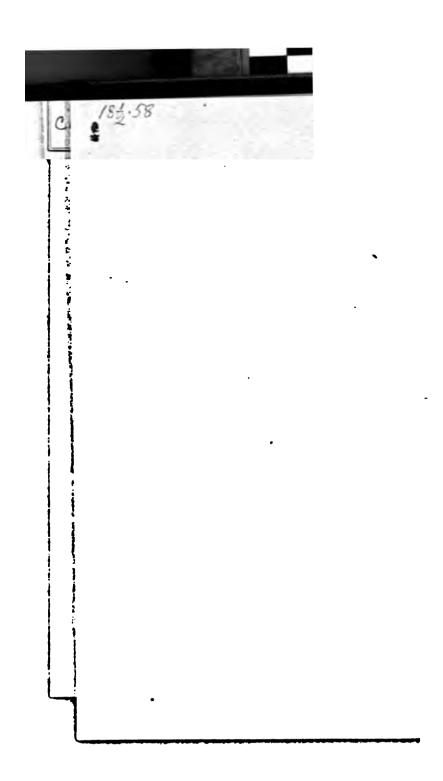
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THE

# "ESSAYS AND REVIEWS"

# EXAMINED;

A SERIES OF ARTICLES CONTRIBUTED TO THE 'MORNING POST.'

REVISED AND CORRECTED BY THE AUTHOR.

WITH PREFACE, INTRODUCTION, AND APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

NOTES AND DOCUMENTS.

BY JAMES BUCHANAN, D.D., LL.D.,
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' FAITH IN GOD, AND MODERN ATREISK COMPARED,' ETC.

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1861

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### PREFACE.

The substance of the following work consists chiefly of a series of articles which the author was kindly invited to supply, and which appeared at stated intervals in the columns of the 'Morning Post.' A desire having been expressed in various quarters that they should be collected and reprinted in a separate form, he could feel no hesitation in complying with it, except what might arise from his deep sense of their manifold defects and imperfections.

From the plan of the series, which contemplated a distinct Examination of each of the 'Essays and Reviews' individually, to be followed up by a general survey of the scheme of thought which is developed in the volume considered as a whole,—it was impossible to avoid altogether some reference to the same topics in different connections, such as may sometimes have the appearance of unnecessary repetition. But the judicious reader will make due allowance for any occasional superfluity of this kind, if he finds that it contributes, on the whole, to the

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clearer exposition and more definite statement of the leading principles which pervade the volume from its commencement to its close.

In the Introduction some brief reference is made to a topic which the author conceives to be one of considerable importance, both in a speculative and practical point of view; the connection, namely, and the contrast between the two Schools which have successively arisen at Oxford; or the common principles which may be shown to belong to both, while their respective tendencies point in such opposite directions. He has confined his remarks chiefly to those views respecting the authority and the interpretation of Scripture which were developed towards the close of the Tractarian movement, and which appear to him to constitute the link of connection between two schools apparently antagonistic. He has offered no exposition of the distinctive principles of Tractarianism: for his views on that subject he may be permitted to refer to a little treatise formerly published, 'On the Tracts for the Times.'\*

• London: Hamilton Adams, and Co. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter. 1843.

#### INTRODUCTION.

#### THE TWO SCHOOLS AT OXFORD:

THEIR POINTS OF CONNECTION AND OF CONTRAST, AS EX-EMPLIFIED IN THE 'TRACTS FOR THE TIMES,' AND THE 'ESSATS AND REVIEWS.'

THAT two Schools of religious thought, so unlike each other in many respects, and with such opposite tendencies, as those which are represented, respectively, by the 'Tracts for the Times,' and the 'Essays and Reviews,' should have both sprung up at Oxford; and, after extending to the sister University, as well as to several provincial colleges, should have created a wide-spread sensation throughout the whole Church of England, and affected, to a large extent, the substance, as well as the form, of her teaching at home and abroad, can hardly fail to be regarded as a remarkable phenomenon which calls for some investigation of its cause and origin, and also as a significant indication of certain under-currents of opinion beneath the smooth surface of educated society which render it one of the most ominous signs of the times. For these two Schools appeared, if not simultaneously, yet in such rapid succession, that

little more than an interval of twenty years elapsed from the first announcement of the one to the full-blown development of the other; and scarcely had the Church time to recover her breath after the shock of an attack on her Protestant formularies, when she was again convulsed and agitated by an assault on the very foundations of her Christian faith.

Considering the brief space of time which intervened between the two, and giving due weight to the fact that both have arisen among contemporaries, or among the pupils of such as lived and laboured together during that interval, it seems reasonable to conclude, that each of them must be traced ultimately to causes which were in active operation at a period antecedent to the public appearance of either. We cannot account for the first sudden transition from old Orthodoxy into a path which led direct to Romanism, nor for the second transition into a path which tends towards the opposite extreme of Rationalism, by ascribing them merely to the caprices of individual minds, or the accidental and wayward vicissitudes of public opinion. Both may have been occasioned, in part, by passing events, and shaped by the exigencies of the hour; but their causes must be traced further back, and may be discovered in the state of mind and feeling existing before the first 'Tract' appeared, and which readily responded to the key-note of that trumpet, proclaiming, with no 'uncertain sound,' a want which all had more or

less intensely felt, but which few had as yet distinctly acknowledged even to themselves. The remote antecedents, as well as the proximate occasions, of such sudden and extensive revolutions in the religious opinions of an educated community, must be taken into account; for it is perfectly true, as one of the 'Essayists' reminds us, that 'both the Church and the world of to-day are what they are as the result of the whole of their antecedents,' and that 'we, in this our time, if we would understand our own position in the Church, and that of the Church in the age,' 'cannot neglect those immediate agencies in the production of the present which had their origin towards the beginning of the eighteenth century.'

If we consider the actual state of religion during the century which immediately preceded the publication of the 'Tracts for the Times' in 1833, we can be at no loss to discover many circumstances which imperatively called for some change, and which may have determined, to some extent, the character and direction of those movements which have recently occurred. During the greater part of that century, and especially from the date of Locke's treatise on 'The Reasonableness of Christianity,' both the religious literature and the pulpit of England exhibited, for the most part, but with some honourable exceptions, a meagre and lifeless form of Christian truth. It may be described as a system which substituted rational arguments for the authoritative lessons of

Revelation,-which, instead of raising men's thoughts to the magnificent scheme of grace and redemption that is unfolded as a supernatural economy in the Gospel, sought to lower its truths to the level of their comprehension,—which, instead of speaking of 'the things of the Spirit,' spoke rather of those 'things of a man that may be known by the spirit of man which is in him,'-and which failed to arrest their attention or engage their interest, just because it had no power to awaken the conscience when it slumbered, and still less to satisfy the conscience when it awoke. The careless gave little heed to it, and the earnest inquirer could derive no relief or comfort from it. The more inquisitive and better educated classes felt that they could dispense with such a Christianity as that; and generally adopted a specious but ill-defined Deism, which maintained the sufficiency of Natural Religion, abjured all faith in mysteries, and did homage to the Gospel only as a code of morals, while Christ was regarded, not as the Son of God and the Redeemer of men, but as a sublime Teacher and perfect pattern of virtue. Meanwhile serious religion, where it did exist, yearned after more spiritual food, and sought for it in the private study of the Scriptures, and the writings of the Reforming or Puritan divines. Thousands flocked to hear a few faithful witnesses for the truth. who spoke home to their hearts and consciences; and a strong evangelical movement, commencing at first within the pale of the National Church, but

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proceeding afterwards in the direction of a more or less reluctant separation from it, issued eventually in the erection of large societies of Nonconformists, alike popular in their character and permanent in their self-sustained organization.

Such was the state of England when the 'Tracts for the Times' were first announced. It seems to have been felt that the National Church was in danger, partly from the unbelief and indifference of the higher and more educated classes, and partly from the estrangement and alienation of the middle and lower orders of society. In these circumstances a vigorous effort must be made to retrieve the errors of the past, and to ward off the dangers to which the Church was now in consequence exposed, by reviving principles which had well-nigh become obsolete, by awakening the clergy to a sense of their duties and responsibilities, and by indoctrinating the public mind, through the medium of tracts, short enough for general circulation, with such sentiments as might serve to arrest the further progress of dissent, if not also to reclaim those who had already forsaken the fold. That there was an urgent call for some such movement, few will venture to deny: and had it been conducted on larger Christian principles, and directed to the revival of those neglected truths in which all the members of Christ's body have a common and heartfelt interest, it might have gone far, under the guidance of men of acknowledged ability, learning, and influence, to heal our

unhappy divisions, and to secure, if not absolu uniformity of outward profession and worship, v that spirit of unity and concord, that genuine C tholicity, which can overlook minor distinctions, at recognise all true Christians as brethren, by wha ever other name they may be called. But, unfo tunately, the authors of the 'Tracts,' in seeking revive old principles which had become obsolet instead of reverting to the rich and precious wri ings of the early English Reformers, sought to r move the blight, which had been inherited from t eighteenth century, by restoring the peculiar vieof the Laudean and Non-juring divines, and th gave a sectarian aspect to their whole enterpris while they cut themselves off from the sympathy multitudes who would otherwise have bid the 'God-speed' in any enlightened attempt to revi the power of true religion in a lukewarm and ind ferent age. Had they proclaimed the message salvation with the same earnestness with which th pressed the Divine right of Episcopacy and the do trine of Apostolical Succession; had they urged t necessity of regeneration by the word and Spirit God as plainly as they taught the efficacy of baptism had they spoken less of human priests and more the great High Priest of our profession-less mere rites and ceremonies, and more of the 'weighti matters of the law,' many would have blessed Go for the movement, who have been compelled to star aloof from it, and even to deplore it, as one th

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could neither be edifying to the Church, nor useful to the world.

But their earnest zeal and untiring efforts have not been without their effect. They have produced more than a temporary excitement; they have been followed by practical results of a most momentous kind, and have left a permanent impress of their influence both on the literature of the age and on the state of the Church itself. They have widened the breach between the National Establishment and all the other Churches of the Reformation. have precipitated hundreds of her ministers, and not a few of her influential members, into the Church of Rome. They have contributed, in some measure, to that sudden and ominous reaction, not only against Church principles, but against the fundamental articles of the Christian faith, which has been long going on at the Universities, and which has at length found articulate utterance in the volume of 'Essays and Reviews.'

We are far from ascribing this new development of unbelief exclusively to the influence of the 'Tracts' for the Times,' or accounting for it as a mere reaction, in the minds of intelligent and educated men, against the narrow views and bigotted spirit of those who attached undue importance to sacredotal claims and ritual observances. We believe that it has a deeper root, and that its chief causes must be sought elsewhere. We have already said that both movements must be traced ultimately to the state and

history of the Church in a prior age. If the Tractarian movement be a revival of the principles of Laud and the Non-jurors, the new movement may justly be described as a continuation of the Deistical reasonings of the eighteenth century. It may be, to some extent, a reaction against Tractarianism; but it is more than a mere reaction; it is partly the product of the same causes which generated the first movement, and partly also the natural development of some principles which were incorporated with the Tracts themselves.

When we say, in the first place, that it is 'partly the product of the same causes which generated the first movement,' some may receive the statement with incredulous wonder, as if it were inconceivable that two Schools, exhibiting such marked differences and such opposite tendencies, should be traceable to a common origin. But the fact is certain, account for it as we may, that frequently in the history of the Church, a sudden reaction against an antecedent state of things has given birth, at all the great critical eras of transition, to antagonist forms of error, as well as contributed to revive some portion of truth. The same causes operating on minds differently constituted, or imbued with different prejudices and feelings, have frequently resulted in the production of the most opposite effects. are, as we have elsewhere said, certain critical eras in the history of religion, when the public mind undergoes a revolutionary change, and when men

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who are not content with the simple truth or unwilling to receive it in its scriptural purity, fall off and diverge from it, but by two different and even opposite routes—the one tending towards superstition, the other towards scepticism: religion being converted into Ritualism in the former case, and into Rationalism in the latter. Eusebius, the acute and learned Bishop of Cæsarea, tells us that in his own age-the age of keen conflict between declining Polytheism and advancing Christianity-when Divine truth was brought into contact with the minds of many heathers who were unwilling to receive it in its simplicity, some who had been previously buried in superstition were awakened out of their dreamy slumbers, and began to perceive the absurdity of their hereditary beliefs; but trusting to their own light, even while they departed from the old beaten road, they diverged into two opposite routes,the one leading to avowed Atheism and the contempt of all religion, the other to a rationalistic and refined Paganism, founded on a mystical or allegorical interpretation of the old popular fables.\* In that sudden and sweeping reaction against the corruptions of the Papacy which gave birth to the Reformation, a similar impulse was given in two opposite directions -the one leading to the extreme of Rationalism in the Socinian movement which was so strongly marked in Italy and Poland, the other to the extreme of

<sup>\*</sup> Eusebii 'Præparatio Evangelica,' lib. il. c. iv. 'North British Review,' No. xxix., p. 47.

bigotry in the Jesuit movement which sprung up within the Church itself. This twofold tendency towards a superstitious Ritualism on the one hand. and a sceptical Rationalism on the other, which seems to be incident to every critical era in the progress of religious thought, might be invested with a sort of dramatic interest by considering the opposite courses pursued by the two brothers Herbert in the seventeenth century, and by the two brothers Newman in the ninetcenth. unsettled state of public opinion which led Lord Herbert of Cherbury, to place himself in the van of the great Deistical movement, drove his saintly brother George into the retirement of his rural parsonage, and a strict observance of all rubrical forms at a time when they were generally neglected and often despised. In the case again of the brothers Newman,-the one, a polished Churchman, a proficient scholar, and an attractive preacher, found congenial food for his mind in the traditions of primitive times, and ample employment for his powers in the defence of Episcopacy as an Apostolical succession, and of Baptism as a regenerating rite; till, having exhausted the Ritualism of the Church of England, he passed over into the Church of Rome, and became a convert to those very doctrines which he had once eloquently assailed; the other, the younger brother, himself a student at Oxford at the time when the elder was still resident there-a thoughtful and accomplished, but independent and inquisitive man,-

#### POINTS OF CONNECTION AND CONTRAST. 17

—acquainted superficially in early life with the doctrines of Evangelical religion, and imbued to some extent with a spirit of religious earnestness, but ill-grounded in the evidences and the system of revealed Theology,—pursued a course directly opposite to that of his senior, and descended step by step until he lost all faith in the historic truth of Christianity. The same tendencies are exemplified, only on a larger scale, in the two Schools which have sprung up almost simultaneously at Oxford, whose distinctive peculiarities are represented respectively by the 'Tracts for the Times' and the 'Essays and Reviews.'

Considering the state of religious opinion and feeling which prevailed in this country during the preceding century, there could be no reason for surprise if it were followed by a sudden reaction, nor even if that reaction should give rise to rival schools with apparently opposite tendencies. For when it began to be felt that the former condition of things could not, and should not, be perpetuated, but that, for the good of society and the safety of the Church, there must be a change of some kind, different minds were already imbued with certain principles which they had inherited from the past, and would naturally seek to apply these to the reconstruction of the future. Some had been disgusted with the rationalistic theology and the latitudinarian policy which then reigned in the Church, and had fallen back on the more authoritative teaching and the stricter Church principles of a former

age, when Laud and the Nonjurors asserted the clusive claims of Episcopacy, and the mysterious cacy of the Sacraments; while others, shrinking f the revival of such antiquated doctrines, and realthough perhaps unconsciously, influenced by vi derived from the great Deistical controversy, w had not passed away without depositing in the pu mind some prolific germs of future error, v naturally predisposed to take an opposite, and, v seemed to them, a more enlightened and lib course, by adapting their Theology to the advar state of human knowledge, and applying to the dences and the interpretation of Scripture itself the tests which history and science and critic might be able to supply. Had two such Sch arisen apart from each other, and in circumstar which rendered it impossible to suppose that t had any connection or interdependence, the or of both, as distinct and independent systems, m have been sufficiently accounted for by ascril them to causes which were in operation, to se extent, before either movement began.

But was there no closer connection between than what is implied in saying that they were no contemporaneous products of pre-existing cause. Had the one School no influence in determining direction and stimulating the development of other? Or, is it possible to conceive, that the could spring up in the same University seats, an such rapid succession, among teachers who versity seats.

contemporaries, and their respective pupils, without exerting some reciprocal influence? In reply to this question, not a few will probably be ready to admit, that there must have been a real, though, perhaps, latent connection between the two: and some may even be disposed to account for the rise of the new School, by ascribing it entirely to a natural reaction, in the minds of educated men, against the antiquated doctrines and the medieval rites which the former School had attempted to revive and restore. some such recoil was felt by enlightened and liberal minds from the most obvious peculiarities of the Tractarian movement, we see no reason, and have no wish, to deny; but we much doubt whether the result should be accounted for on the principle of a mere reaction. On a deeper and closer inspection, it will be found that, if there be a striking contrast, there is also a radical connection between the two movements; that the development of the first contained, at least in its more advanced stage, the germ of the second; and that, opposite as are the directions in which they tend,—the one towards Romanism and superstition, the other towards Rationalism and Infidelity,—they may be traced ultimately, in their mature and final form, to a few radical principles which were common to both.

The reader will carefully mark the qualifications with which this statement is made. It is only 'in its more advanced stage' that the Tractarian movement is said to have contained the germ of a subse-

quent development in another direction; and it is only 'in their mature and final form,' that the two movements are traced to certain radical principles which were common to both. For although we often speak of the Tractarian movement as if it were one continuous, self-consistent, and consecutive development of the same scheme of thought, yet, in point of fact, it consisted of two distinct and welldefined stages, which differed materially from each other; and this is a point which is often overlooked, but which, in justice to all parties, should be explained and placed before our readers in a clear and convincing light. Any one who will take the trouble to compare the earlier with the later 'Tracts,' will find that, as the series advanced towards its completion, there was a corresponding advance in the development of the system which it was designed to unfold; that its initial announcements were far from being its final results; and that, in its later stages, it raised questions which had not been mooted before, and brought into marked prominence certain views and principles which had hitherto been kept out of sight, if, indeed, they had ever occurred to the minds of the writers themselves. So far from adhering to the same line of argument throughout, the authors of the 'Tracts' departed from it so signally, that we might be justified in describing their later statements as being directly contradictory to their earlier ones. It may be difficult to draw the line between the two, or to mark the precise point

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of transition from the one to the other; it may be still more difficult to determine whether the change should be ascribed to reticence on the part of the writers in their earlier expositions, or to a growing insight into the real difficulties of the subjects which they had undertaken to illustrate; but of the fact that there was a change, no reasonable doubt can be entertained. And Dr Goode refers to it, as well as to the two explanations of which it might be susceptible, when he says,—in his admirable treatise on the 'Divine Rule of Faith and Practice,'-'As time advanced, and the number of their adherents increased, the reserve formerly practised has been gradually thrown aside; perhaps, indeed, their own views have become more fixed and definite than when they commenced their labours.'

This change affected their views chiefly on two points,—the first being the character and claims of the Romish Church,—and the second, the evidence, authority, and sufficiency of the Scriptures as the rule of faith. Their mode of treating these two important subjects in their later 'Tracts,' paved the way for each of the apparently opposite results which have been recently realised; the secession of a large number of the ministers and members of the Church of England who have entered into the Romish communion, and the formation of another influential party within the Church, as well as beyond its pale, who are tending to the opposite extreme of Rationalism and Infidelity.

We have marked a change, first of all, in their views as to the character and claims of the Church of Rome. It is undeniable that, in the earlier 'Tracts.' many of the peculiar doctrines and rites of that Church are unevaringly condemned. It is equally undeniable that, as the series advances, the tone of censure is softened, and even exchanged for accents of reverence, admiration, and affection. Mark how they speak of Rome, while as yet they were contending for the Episcopal Protestant Church. have some misgivings, it seems, lest the doctrine I have been advocating should lead to Popery. will not, by way of answer, say that the question is not, whether it will lead to Popery, but whether it is in the Bible; because it would bring the Bible and Popery into one sentence, and seem to imply the possibility of a "communion" between "light and darkness." No; it is the very enmity I feel against the Papistical corruptions of the Gospel, which leads me to press upon you a doctrine of Scripture which we are sinfully surrendering, and the Church of Rome has faithfully retained. How comes it that a system so unscriptural as the Popish makes converts? because it has in it an element of truth and comfort amid its falsehoods. . . And, truly, when one surveys the grandeur of their system, a sigh arises in the thoughtful mind, to think that we should be separate from them. "Cum talis esses, utinam noster esses!" But, alas! AN UNION IS IM-POSSIBLE. Their communion is infected with hetero-

doxy; we are bound to flee it as a postilence. They have established a lie in the place of God's truth; and, by their claim of immutability in doctrine, cannot undo the sin they have committed. They cannot repent. Popery must be destroyed; it cannot be reformed.' (Tract 20, p. 1, 3). Here, at least, 'the trumpet gives no uncertain sound;' and soon after (Tract 38, p. 12), mention is made of 'irreconcilcable differences with the system of Rome as it is.' By and by, the opposition to that Church becomes much more gentle: and we seem to hear accents of plaintive tenderness. 'Considering the high gifts and the strong claims of the Church of Rome and its dependencies, on our admiration, reverence, love, and gratitude, how could we withstand it as we do; how could we refrain from being melted into tenderness, and rushing into communion with it, but for the word of truth itself, which bids us to prefer it to the whole world.' . . 'Do we not hover about our ancient home,—the home of Cyprian and Athanasius,—without the heart to take up our abode in it, yet afraid to quit the sight of it.' 'Is it then a duty to forget that Rome was our mother, through whom we were born to Christ,—that she was the instrument chosen by God's providence to bring the Gospel to the wild heathen tribes, from which most of us are sprung.' Even still, however, the reasons are stated, 'Why we remain separate from Rome' (No. 71); and in republishing Archbishop Usher's treatise on 'Prayers for the Dead,'

'at a time like the present, when many persons are in doubt whether they are not driven to an alternative of either giving up the primitive Fathers or embracing Popery,' their object is said to be, 'to erect safe and substantial bulwarks for the Anglican Church against the Church of Rome: to draw clear and intelligible lines which may allow (the Churchman) securely to expatiate in the rich pastures of catholicism, without the reasonable dread that he, as an individual, may fall into the snare of Popery.' But, at length, 'a change comes o'er the spirit of their dream.' They had assumed a position which they found it difficult to maintain in connection with Protestant principles. Their fundamental error lay in the assumption, that the Rule of Faith consists not of Scripture alone, as our only Divine infallible informant, but of Scripture combined with tradition, or of Scripture as interpreted by the primitive Church. The words of fallible men, oral or written, were thus invested with an authority co-ordinate with that of the inspired Word of God. The writers seem to have thought, for a time, that they could strike out a via media between the Romish and the Protestant doctrine, and that they might safely adopt the rule of Vincent of Lerins, 'quod semper, quod ubique, et quod ab omnibus.' But, in applying that rule, they soon found themselves involved in inextricable difficulties. It was a hard task to prove any one of their peculiar principles by the unanimous consent of the early Fathers, and still more to

separate these principles from the corruptions with which they were blended, even in primitive times, and which contained the germ of many of the subsequent errors of Popery. In these circumstances they were compelled to cast about for some plausible reasons, to show that they might consistently adhere to their favourite rule, notwithstanding its acknowledged difficulties; and, in an evil hour, they were induced to have recourse to the perilous expedient of attempting to show that the teaching of tradition. in regard to their Church principles, was not more uncertain than the teaching of Scripture itself, in regard to some of the fundamental articles of the Christian faith; and that the modern Church is entirely dependent on the authority of the first four centuries for its belief in the inspiration and canonicity of the apostolic writings. This position could not be their final resting-place,—they must either recede or advance; and some who had been tinctured, to a certain extent, with Church doctrines, seem to have been arrested at this point, and to have fallen back on the principle,—that Scripture alone is the rule of faith, while they still retained a deep, and, perhaps, inordinate veneration for the primitive Church, as the earliest expounder of Scripture, and continued to speak of Catholic consent, if not as an infallible interpreter of the truth, yet, at least, as a sure and necessary test of heresy. But from this point we mark, among other adherents of the Church system, a striking example of the 'facilis

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descensus Averni,' in the inevitable development of a false principle, in two opposite directions, which led some, when they felt the foundations of Protestantism crumbling away beneath them, to throw themselves, as if in desperation, into the arms of an infallible Church; while it led others, by virtue of the sceptical tendency which was common to both, to recoil alike from tradition and from Scripture, and to abjure all authoritative teaching in matters of faith.

The descent in the direction of Romanism was the earliest development of that principle; and it first aroused public attention to the new danger with which the Church was threatened, by the startling rapidity with which it followed the announcement of principles that were supposed to be at utter variance with the exclusive claims of Rome, and by the practical commentary on these principles, which was exhibited in the actual secession of multitudes from the Protestant communion. This consummation. however, was not effected suddenly, nor did it take place until much had been done to undermine the foundations of the Protestant Church of England. and to explain away the meaning of her Articles. or the obligation which was involved in subscription. They might be explained in what was first called a Catholic, but what soon appeared to be a Roman Catholic, sense; and might be subscribed honestly, not in the meaning of those who framed and imposed them, which was unquestionably Pro-

testant, but in a new meaning recently invented and superinduced upon them by the sole authority of those who had subscribed them. Accordingly an elaborate attempt was made to show that they were susceptible of such an interpretation, and might be understood in a sense which was not at variance with the peculiar doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome. In Tract 90, containing 'Remarks on certain passages in the Thirty-nine Articles.' the Church was startled, and the whole community scandalised, by an exposition of their doctrines such as could only find its parallel in the attempt of Davenport, or Francis a Sancta Clara, in a former age, to reconcile them with those of the Romish Church as determined by the Council of Trent. that thoroughly Jesuitical Tract, the writer protests against the supposition that 'persons who profess to be disciples of the early Church will silently concur with those of very opposite sentiments in furthering a relaxation of subscriptions, which, it is imagined, are galling to both parties, though for different reasons,' and sets himself to show that in the meantime. the Church should make no change in that respect.— 'let the Church sit still,—let her be content to be in bondage,-let her work in chains,-let her submit to her imperfections as a punishment,—let her go on teaching with the stammering lips of ambiguous formularies, and inconsistent precedents, and principles but partially developed.' But is the solemn practice of subscription to be continued? Unquestionably, why not? since it may be shown that our Articles, the offspring of an uncatholic age, are, through God's good Providence, to say the least, not uncatholic, and may be subscribed by those who aim at being catholic in heart and doctrine.'

And how does the writer interpret the Articles so as to show that they are susceptible of a Catholic or even of a Roman Catholic sense? On the vi. and xx. Articles which relate to Holy Scripture and the authority of the Church, we are told that 'two important questions are left unsettled, viz., whether the Church judges, first, at her sole discretion, next, on her sole responsibility, i.e., first, what the media are by which the Church interprets Scripture, whether by a direct Divine gift, or Catholic tradition, or critical exegesis of the text, or in any other way; and next, who is to decide whether it interprets Scripture rightly or not,-what is her method, if any, and who is her judge, if any. In other words, not a word is said, on the one hand, in favour of Scripture having no rule or method to fix interpretation by, or, as it is commonly expressed, being the sole rule of faith; nor, on the other, of the private judgment of the individual being the ultimate standard of interpretation.' Both are accordingly set aside; and it is boldy avowed, that 'in the sense in which it is commonly understood at this day, Scripture, it is plain, is not, on Anglican principles, the Rule of Faith.' They thus concede the principle which Archbishop Whitgift declared to be 'the

ground of all Papistry,' for the fundamental question between the Protestant and Romish Churches relates to the Rule of Faith; and the abandonment of that principle opened the flood-gate of error. so we have the Popish doctine of Justification; for ' an assent to the doctrine that Faith alone justifies. does not at all preclude the doctrine of Works justifying also,' and 'Faith, as being the beginning of perfect or justifying righteousness, is taken for what it tends towards, or ultimately will be'-' Faith working by love is the seed of Divine graces, which in due time will be brought forth and flourishpartly in this world, and fully in the next.' And so of the doctrine of the Church, of General Councils, of purgatory, pardons, images, relics, invocation of saints; of the sacraments, transubstantiation, and masses, of the marriage of the clergy, and the supremacy of the Pope,—such an interpretation is given as is designed to show that there is nothing distinctively Protestant in the Articles of the Church of England, and nothing that should prevent Anglican Catholics from subscribing them, or constrain those who had already subscribed them, to feel that they were bound in conscience to relinquish their offices and preferments.

The moral indignation which the announcement of such views excited in the general community, rather than any act of discipline on the part of the constituted authorities of the Church, brought matters to a practical issue. Many of the adherents of

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the so-called Catholic principles were made to fee that they could no longer remain, with consistence and honour, in connection with a Church whos articles, however 'ambiguous,' and susceptible of 'non-natural' interpretation, must have been felt t be galling to their conscience; and one after another in large numbers, sought refuge in the communion of Rome. Concurrently with this movement, ther was going on in the minds which mainly originate and guided it, a still further progress in the direc tion of a more complete theory of Romanism,progress whose commencement had been sufficiently indicated in Mr Newman's 'Sermons on the Theor of Religious Belief,' preached before the University of Oxford, and published in 1843,-but whose mor mature results became apparent, when casting asidthe old rule of Vincentius Lerinensis-' quod semper quod umbique, et quod ab omnibus,'-as no longe sufficient for his purpose, he boldly proclaimed the theory of 'Development' of Christian Doctrine by the sole authority of the Church, -a theory as mucl opposed to the old doctrine of Rome itself as to the principles of the Reformation, and which bore a suspicious resemblance to those philosophical speculations on Human Progress which had generally beer found associated with utter scepticism on the subjecof Revealed Religion.

Let it be carefully remarked, that this result was at direct variance with the principles which were professed, not only by those who have since left the

#### POINTS OF CONNECTION AND CONTRAST. 31

Church of England, but also by many who still adhere to her communion, at the commencement of their common enterprise to revive certain doctrines which had been neglected during the previous century :-- that they began with denouncing Romanism as a communion 'infected with heterodoxy,' which had 'established a lie in the place of God's truth,' which they were 'bound to flee as a pestilence,' and which 'must be destroyed,' for 'it cannot be reformed;'-and that many of them ended, nevertheless, in uniting themselves with that very Church which they had so unsparingly denounced. fact of such a great and rapid change having occurred in all their views in regard to the character and claims of the Romish Church, may prepare us to expect that there might be a change also among their disciples in another and very different direction. and that this second movement may possibly owe its origin to some principles which began to be mooted as the 'Tracts' advanced in their course-respecting the evidence, authority, and sufficiency of the Scriptures as the Rule of Faith.

It may surprise some of our readers to be told, that the germ of the sceptical movement which has given birth to the 'Essays and Reviews,' may be found in certain principles which came to be engrafted on the Anglo-Catholic movement at a later stage in its progress, and which first appeared in the 'Tracts for the Times.' These common principles, which we regard as the connecting link between

two Schools with such opposite characteristics and tendencies, are such as relate to the fundamenta topics which we have just mentioned—viz., the evidence, authority, and sufficiency of the Scriptures at the Rule of Faith.

In the second movement, as in the first, there was a marked progress in the development of those views which ultimately determined their direction, and developed their respective results. For, just as in the earlier stage, there was a vigorous protest against Romanism, which resulted, nevertheless, in the ultimate adoption of all her peculiar doctrines and rites so there was a firm adherence to the dogmatic teaching of the Church, which, although it rested partly on the authority of Scripture, and partly on patristic interpretation and primitive tradition. was unquestionably opposed to scepticism, as well as to heresy, which resulted, nevertheless, in the ultimate adoption of all the leading principles of modern unbelief. The change, in this respect, was quite as marked, if it was not so rapidly developed, as ir the other. For, unquestionably the writers of the 'Tracts' set out as the adherents and advocates of a fixed system of dogmatic teaching, and of definite articles of faith, insomuch that they opposed alike the latitudinarian opinions of Free-thinkers, and the idea of anything like doctrinal development within the Church itself. Witness the strong statement contained in 'Tract' 60, which is entirely devoted to enforce the necessity of 'definite views of doc-

## POINTS OF CONNECTION AND CONTRAST. 33

trine respecting the person, office, and work of Christ.' They speak of the presumption of 'intruding men's opinions and fancies into the place of God's truth,'-of Christ 'being to be loved and served, not such as men choose to imagine Him, but such as He really and truly is;' and they add:-'Let it be well considered by such as imagine that sincerity of heart is everything, and doctrine nothing, or very little, what they can make of the awful anathema in Galatians-"Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." The verse speaks of the creed as a whole, which the Galatians had received of St Paul. It does not leave them at liberty to choose out which articles they would consider as important, according to their notions and experience of practical good or edifying effect, arising out of one more than another. But it supposes them to have received a certain "form of sound words," which no abstract reasoning or theory of their own-nay, no miraculous or other marks of heavenly authority-would warrant their adding to, or diminishing.' 'There is evidently no security, no rest for the sole of one's foot, except in "the form of sound words"—the one definite system of doctrine, sanctioned by the one Apostolical and Primitive Church.'

How is it possible, it may be asked, that a series of 'Tracts,' containing such a clear and explicit recognition of a Divine authoritative standard of doctrine and of definite articles of faith, can be supposed. to have any connection with such a scheme of thought as is developed in the 'Essays and Reviews.' and still more to stand related to it as cause and And unquestionably, were this the only doctrine taught on the subject, the objection would be alike pertinent and conclusive. But have we not already seen that the earlier 'Tracts' contained sound protests against Popish error, while the later ones adopted and sanctioned it,—and this not through inadvertence, or in violent contradiction to their known principles, but through the gradual and progressive development of a scheme of thought, which rested ultimately on the ground that the Scriptures are not the sole rule of faith, and which led them to place their authority on the same level with that of tradition or the Church, or rather on a lower level still, since the Scriptures themselves were made to depend on the tradition of primitive times? and would it be wonderful if some, who were imbued with these principles, but unwilling to follow their leaders in their further progress towards Popery, should break off at this point, and originate a movement in the opposite direction, towards what they might call a more liberal and rational view of Chris-Suppose a student at Oxford to have tianity? grown up under the teaching of those who proclaimed that the Bible is not the rule of Christian faith—that it depends for its authority on the sanction of the primitive Church—that we have no

evidence for its inspiration or canonicity, except such as may be derived from Catholic tradition; and that so far from being the sole source of religious knowledge, it would be difficult to prove any doctrine from Scripture alone,—would he not be prepared, by such teaching, to give at least their full weight to all the sceptical cavils of modern unbelief, and to join in any new movement which might hold out the prospect at once of an escape from Romanism, and a relief, at the same time, from all authoritative teaching in matters of faith?

There might be a certain measure of reaction in the case, the reaction of independent minds against the revival of mediaval doctrines and usages; but there was more than a mere reaction—there is an intelligible link of connection between those views of Scripture which the reader had been taught to entertain, and those ulterior conclusions, in which he was, perhaps, only too willing to acquiesce. For what were the principles with which the writers of the 'Tracts' sought, as the series advanced towards its completion, to indoctrinate the minds of their readers? They were such as these.

Vincent of Lerins, is quoted as saying, that there are 'two ways' by which a man may preserve himself sound in the faith, 'first, by the authority of Scripture, next by the teaching of the Church Catholic. Here, some one perhaps will demand, why I need make mention of the Church's understanding of Scripture at all, considering that the

Canon of the Scriptures is perfect and self-sufficient, nav. more than sufficient for all things? To which I answer, that the very depth of Holy Scripture prevents its being taken by all men in one and the same sense, one man interpreting it in one way, one in another: so that it seems almost possible to draw from it as many opinions as there are readers.' 'It is a near thing, if I may so speak, that they, the doctrines of faith, are in Scripture at all: the wonder is, that they are all there: humanly judging, they would not be there but for God's interposition; and, therefore, since they are there by a sert of accident, it is not strange that they should be but latent there, and only indirectly producible thence.' These statements plainly imply the insufficiency and unsuitableness of Scripture to be the Rule of Faith, and were designed to shut men up to the authoritative interpretation of the Church: but suppose that, in any case, it failed of this effect, might it not still leave an impression of the uncertainty of the teaching of Scripture, such as might prepare many a young man to agree with Professor Jowett when he says, 'Nor is it easy to say what is the meaning of "proving a doctrine from Scripture." For when we demand logical equivalents and similarity of circumstances, when we balance adverse statements, St James and St Paul, the New Testament with the Old, it will be hard to demon-

<sup>\*</sup> Tracts, 'Records of the Church,' No. 24, 2. Tract 85, p. 84.

#### POINTS OF CONNECTION AND CONTRAST. 37

strate from Scripture any complex system either of doctrine or practice.\*\*

The Evidences of Christianity are disparaged, and the use of them is described as a species of Rational-'Many difficulties are connected with the evidence of the Canon; we might have clearer evidences for it than we have.' 'There are many difficulties connected with the evidence of the Church doctrines; they might be more clearly contained in Scripture, nay, in the extant writings of the three first centuries, than they are.' 'There is something very arresting and impressive in the fact that there should be these difficulties attending the two great instruments of religious truth which we possess. 'How do we know the doctrine is from God? When we go to inquire into the reasons in argument, we find that the prayer-book rests upon the Bible, and the Bible rests on testimony; that the Church doctrines, which the prayer-book contains, are to be gathered from Scripture, and that the books of Scripture, which make up the Bible, are to be gathered from history; and, further, that those doctrines might have been more clearly stated in the Bible, and the books of the Bible more clearly witnessed by antiquity.' 'Why has He not spoken more clearly? He has given us doctrines which are but obscurely gathered from Scripture, and a Scripture which is but obscurely gathered from history. We have two informants, and both leave

" 'Essays,' p. 866.

room for doubt' (Tract 85, 108). These statements were evidently designed to show that the evidence for Church doctrines was not more defective than that for Scripture itself; -and, in so far as they carried conviction to any mind, must they not have left the impression that the whole scheme of Christianity rested on precarious grounds, and prepared many a young man to agree with Mr Pattison when he says, that 'neither the external nor the internal evidences are properly theology at all'that 'both methods alike, as methods of argumentative proof, place the mind in an unfavourable attitude for the consideration of religious truth'-that where it is busied in establishing the genuineness and authenticity of the books of Scripture,' 'Rationalism is seen in its dullest and least spiritual form,' and that 'either religious faith has no existence, or it must be to be reached by some other road than that of "the trial of the witnesses" (Essays, 264, 296).

But not only is the evidence defective now, it was equally doubtful in the time of our Lord Himself. 'The Jews were left in the same uncertainty about Christ, in which we are about His doctrine.' 'The whole system of the prophecies left the Jews (even after Christ came) where we are—in doubt.' 'If any one will seriously consider the intercourse with our Lord and the Pharisees, he will see that "they had just reason to complain (as men now speak) that the gospel was not preached to them,"—that they were bid to believe on weak arguments and fanciful

deductions' (Tract 85, p. 111). These statements may have been designed to show that it is our duty. as it was the duty of the Jews, to believe on whatever evidence God might be pleased to vouchsafe;but might they not leave the impression that the evidence actually provided, in either case, was ill adapted for the satisfaction of intelligent minds, and prepare many a young man to agree with Professor Jowett, when he says 'the religion of Christ was first taught by an application of the words of the Psalms and the Prophets. Our Lord Himself sanctioned this application.' 'The new truth which was introduced into the New Testament, rather than the old truth which was found there, was the salvation and the conversion of the world. There are many quotations from the Psalms and the Prophets in the Epistles, in which the meaning is quickened or spiritualised, but hardly any, probably none, which is based on the original sense or context' (Essays, p. 406).

There are many other striking coincidences, in particular points, bearing on the evidence and authority of Scripture, between the 'Tracts' and 'Essays,' but we must be content with the few specimens which have been given above. Every one who is familiar with the Protestant controversy, must be aware that the line of argument generally adopted by Popish writers, is directed to prove that there is no alternative between the implicit reception of their doctrines and absolute infidelity,—that for this end they seek to invalidate the authority, and to disprove

the sufficiency of Scripture as the Rule of Faith; and that where they have not succeeded in making converts to Romanism, they have succeeded, to a lamentable extent, in sowing the seeds of unbelief in every country where their influence prevails. Let any one read Tracts 85 and 90, and say whether this is not precisely the line of argument which their authors pursued in support of the Church system; and whether the subsequent development of unbelief might not be its natural and inevitable consequence. It is easy to see this now, when the latent tendencies of that mode of reasoning have at length come to light, and assumed a palpable form in the 'Essays and Reviews:' but it must surely be regarded as no slight proof of the practical sagacity of Archbishop Whately, that from his knowledge of the theological bearings of certain principles, and from a consideration of their incipient tendencies, he was able to predict beforehand a certain and speedy development of infidelity in connection with the Oxford movement. We quote his memorable words of warning, with some of the reasons on which they were founded, at a time when men's minds were alarmed only at the prospect of an increase of Popery, and not in the least apprehensive of a movement in any other direction.

'The dangers which appear to me the most formidable, are not those which alone are dreaded by some persons. I do not, indeed, doubt that several hundreds, perhaps thousands, comprising the

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most honest and consistent of the party, will have become, through its influence, converts to Romanism . . . but all who shall have been thus led openly to renounce our communion for another, will be found, I fear, much fewer than those whom the same causes will have led to, or confirmed in, total infidelity . . . For—

- '1. The writings (in question) indicate in their general tone that Christianity will not stand the test of close inquiry. They deride as absurd, and censure as profane, and deprecate as hazardous, all attempts to investigate evidence; making faith not the result of evidence, but something opposed to it. And going still further, they distinctly declare all the evidences of Christianity that have been put forth by the ablest divines, to be absolutely inferior to that which satisfies an ignorant clown, who believes just what the pastor of the parish tells him.'...
- '2. The impression thus produced is strengthened by the circumstance, that these writers patronise the system of "Reserve," "Economy," or "Double-doctrine"—the allowableness, and the duty, of having one Gospel for the mass of the people, and another for the initiated few.'
- '3. Moreover the writings in question discourage, indirectly but in effect, and with great assiduity, the study of the Scriptures. In the first place, they labour assiduously to place on a level with Scripture history, the voluminous legends of the pretended Middle-age miracles. And they also represent strongly, the uselessness and the danger of studying

Scripture as a guide to the Christian, without constant reference to the interpretations of primitive Tradition.'

- '4. The earnestness, again, with which these writers deprecate "private judgment," has a similar tendency.' . . . .
- '5. There are similar injurious tendencies in the doctrine of "Apostolical Succession," in that sense in which it has of late been the fashion to maintain it.
- 'Now, let a man be but once convinced, 1st, That Christianity cannot stand the test of inquiry; 2d, That he has no ground for certainty as to the real belief of those who teach it; 3d, That Scripture need not be studied; 4th, That the exercise of private judgment is forbidden; and 5th, That Christianity is merely a system of outward ordinances; let him but adopt all these notions, and what is there to stand between him and infidelity or indifferentism?'

'Others there are who feel, indeed, some apprehensions such as my own, of the spread of infidelity in consequence of the teaching of that School, but apprehend it as something that may arise in a future generation: whereas, to me it appeared from the very first, that the danger was as immediate as it is great; and inquiry may now convince any one that the tree is already bearing its poisonous fruits,—that they are fast ripening all around us,—and that "the plague is begun." '\*

Whately's 'Essays on the Peculiarities of the Christian Religion.' L Series, p. 18; see pp. 5, 8, 17, 865.

### POINTS OF CONNECTION AND CONTRAST, 43

We have adverted to the Connection and the Contrast between the two Schools, which are represented respectively by the 'Tracts for the Times,' and the 'Essays and Reviews,' for the double purpose of showing that the rise of the one cannot be accounted for by ascribing it to a mere reaction against the peculiarities of the other, but had a more radical and intimate connection with it through certain principles which are common to both: and further, that these principles, which were afterwards developed in opposite directions,-tending, on the one hand, towards Romanism and Superstition, on the other, towards Rationalism and Scepticism.were not prominently presented in the earlier portion of the Tracts, but were gradually unfolded as the series advanced towards its completion. Common justice, as well as Christian charity towards those who were more or less connected with the Tractarian movement, demands a distinct recognition of the fact, that many who were led to admire the Anglo-Catholic theory, and to adopt Church principles in conformity with it, at the earlier stage of the movement, were in no respect committed to its later developments, and were not bound, as otherwise they might have been, in consistency and honour, to leave the Church of England, or to follow their more daring leaders, either in their return to Rome, or in any other direction which the movement might subsequently take. We have reason to believe that not a few who were, to some extent, imbued with the

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Ecclesiastical principles which the 'Tracts' were designed to revive, had no sympathy whatever with the Theological Speculations with which they came. to be afterwards associated; that some actually broke off from their leaders, as much to his honour Mr Palmer did, at the point of transition from the earlier to the later form of the doctrine, and publicly protested against the dangerous tendencies which had begun to appear,—and that many more, who made no public declaration on the subject, refused to be led either in the direction either of Romanism or of Rationalism, and resolved to adhere to what appeared to them to be the via media of the old Church of England. We may regret their extreme views on some points of Ecclesiastical polity; we cannot question their consistency, or impute to them any but the purest motives in continuing to adhere to the Protestant Establishment.

# 'ESSAYS AND REVIEWS' EXAMINED.

## No. I.

## 'THE EDUCATION OF THE WORLD.'\*

THE Master of Rugby must be a high authority on any question of classical scholarship; but 'The Education of the World,' similar as it may be in some respects to 'The Education of the School,' differs from it very materially in others; and one who may be competent to pronounce a sound judgment on the second, may be utterly incompetent to frame a comprehensive theory of the first. Dominie Samson himself might be an excellent pedagogue without being much of a philosopher,—a capital disciplinarian, but a sorry divine.

Dr Temple's theory is founded on the analogy which is supposed to subsist between the advancement of an individual from childhood to youth, and

<sup>• &#</sup>x27;The Education of the World.' By Frederick Temple, D.D., Chaplain to the Queen, Head Master of Rugby School, etc. The Fourth Edition. London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts.

from youth to manhood, and the progress of the race, considered as 'a colossal man,' through a series of corresponding stages. The idea of progressive development in either case, and of a certain resemblance between the two, such as may render the one in some respects illustrative of the other, is natural enough, and far from being new or original. It resembles the parallelism betwixt the successive stages of human life, and the corresponding succession of the seasons, which makes spring a fit emblem of youth, and winter of old age; and which suggested some fine 'moral analogies' to the profound and meditative mind of Foster. There can be no reasonable objection to any judicious application of it in this way, provided only that due care be taken not to confound what is a mere poetical image, or figure of speech, with an inductive analogy.

In this way the Apostle makes use of it on two different occasions. For, speaking of the Jewish nation, he says in one place that 'The heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.' And again, speaking of his own individual experience as illustrative of the difference between the present and the future state of Christian believers themselves, he says—'When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child, but when I became a man, I put away childish things; for now we see through a glass

darkly, but then face to face.' From these Scriptural statements, we learn that there was the same difference between the condition of the Church under the Jewish and Christian dispensations, as there is between the state of an heir who is as yet under tutors and governors, and his higher and freer condition when he comes of age; and that there is still a similar difference between the condition even of the Christian Church on earth and its more perfect state in heaven. Thus far the analogy between the experience of the Church and that of an individual in passing from childhood to youth, and from youth to mature manhood, is clearly recognised in Scripture; and when applied within these limits it is eminently suggestive, and well fitted to convey spiritual instruction, not by proving any doctrine, but simply by illustrating one truth by means of another more familiarly known.

But in the hands of Dr Temple, the analogy is carried out far beyond these limits, and is employed to illustrate, not any Scriptural truth, but a mere fancy of his own. It is no longer applied merely to throw light on God's method of procedure in His dispensations towards the Church, so as to explain the difference between the state of the Jewish and that of the Christian disciple, or between the state of the Christian disciple himself on earth and in heaven; it is extended to the race at large, and applied to explain 'The Education of the World.' The Church is supposed—for what reason we can-

not tell—to be, in this respect, the 'representative of mankind,' although the other nations had neither, in his sense of the terms, a season of childhood nor a season of youth, since they never had the Law which was given to the Jews, nor the Example which was vouchsafed to the primitive Christians. Yet, holding the analogy to be applicable to all nations and ages. notwithstanding these important differences, he founds upon it an attempt to explain the law of progress in the 'Education of the World,' and announces the startling discovery, apparently in regard to all alike, that there are three stages, which are thus described. 'First come Rules, then Examples, then Principles. First comes the Law, then the Son of Man, then the gift of the Spirit. The world was once a child, under tutors and governors, until the time appointed by the Father. Then, when the fit season had arrived, the Example to which all ages should turn, was sent to teach men what they ought to be. Then the human race was left to itself, to be guided by the teaching of the Spirit within.'

When the doctrine is transferred from the Church to the race, we are naturally led to inquire what there was, or could be, in the history of the heathen nations, which can furnish a parallel to the recorded experience of those who were placed under the revealed law of Moses, or privileged with the personal example of Christ? This question is not directly faced, or answered in explicit terms; but we

are told that Rome, Greece, and even Asia contributed largely to the education of the world. Be it so; but what was the childhood, what the youth, and what the manhood of heathendom, if, in the case of the Church, childhood was a state of subjection to Law, and youth a state of liberation from rules by the substitution of a godlike Example, and manhood a state of more complete emancipation, in which both Law and Example are superseded by 'the gift of the Spirit?' What parallelism exists between cases so dissimilar, which are supposed to fall under the same law of development? Does Divine supernatural revelation in the one case. and the absence of it in the other, make no material difference between the two? Or would the race, as a whole, have followed the same course of advancement had no such revelation been vouchsafed?

The truth is, that the Master of Rugby, in extending the analogy beyond the limits within which it is recognised in Scripture, has only added another to the many theories of progress which have been so rife of late on the Continent; and all such theories, in so far as they either deny or ignore a supernatural revelation, have an infidel tendency. We have the Positive theory of progress, 'the fundamental law of man's historical development,' discovered and, as he thought, demonstrated by Auguste Comte—a law according to which every branch of our knowledge passes successively through

three different states: the first being the theological or imaginative, which commences with Fetichism, advances to Polytheism, and culminates in Monotheism; the second, the metaphysical or abstract, which is a state of transition, criticism and doubt; the third, the scientific or positive,—the ultimate term of human progress,-which supersedes alike the theology of our childhood and the metaphysics of our youth, and brings us in our mature manhood to a cold, dreary, desolate atheism. We have the Humanitarian theory of progress, elaborated by Pierre Leroux; a theory founded on the solidarity of the race, which represents its progress as depending on two opposite poles-permanence and durability, combined with perpetual movement and change-and on three indispensable conditions -the family in which men are born, the country in which they dwell, the property which they inherit or acquire: and which terminates in the deification of a mere abstraction.—the idea of humanity.—and the denial of any other immortality than that of the race to which they belong. We have the Eclectic theory of progress, developed and illustrated by Victor Cousin, in which, founding on a trinary distinction in individual consciousness, he attempts to deduce from it the historical development of the race, and divides it into three great epochs, inevitable in their occurrence, and invariable in the order of their succession. We have the Saint Simonian, the Hegelian, and many more theories of the same

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kind, all attempting the impracticable task of constructing history à priori, and bringing it under the dominion of an inexorable necessity, or of some mere natural law. Such speculations, so incessantly renewed, may be justly held to indicate a deepscated conviction that there is a plan in the dispensations of Providence, and a progress also in the development of man; but the mystery which envelopes the one, adheres also to the law which determines the other, and whether that law be discoverable or not by the unaided light of nature, it has not at least been actually ascertained. progress of the race, as well as of every portion of it individually, depends on so many causes, and these of such various kinds-climate, soil, constitutional temperament, hereditary tendencies, political institutions, civil government, and social influences; and it is so far from being uniform and constant as to exhibit rather a perpetual alternation of revival and decay, of onward movement and retrogression. -that one can scarcely conceive a more difficult or complicated problem than to determine its fundamental law; and assuredly it will never find its solution in any fanciful analogy between the individual and the 'colossal man.' However we may lean to the belief that, on the whole, the race is advancing, since every new generation is heir to the accumulated experience and wisdom of all which have preceded it, yet history shows that the main impulse to progress has always been communicated

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from without, and has been ascribed, in most cases, to those supernatural revelations and spiritual influences, of which most theorists make little account, but without which we can neither explain the facts of the past, nor reckon with any certainty on the prospects of the future.

But let us test the validity and value of this new theory of progress, by examining somewhat more closely the analogy on which it is made to rest, and viewing it in the light of theology, history, and a sound doctrine of education.

Viewed in the light of revealed theology, what portions of man's history, when we speak of the race, should be represented by the childhood and manhood of the individual? According to Scripture, the one must evidently correspond to his pristine state of integrity when he was 'made in the image of God;' and the other, to the perfect maturity which is awaiting bim in another and a nobler state of being. In tracing the history of man, the Bible spans the whole hemisphere of time, and connects 'Paradise Lost' with 'Paradise Re-How does this magnificent conception square with Dr Temple's theory? Does the progress of which he speaks commence with a state of primitive perfection, or with a state of barbarism? Does it leave room for a Fall, or for a Restoration, properly so called? He nowhere denies either man's original dignity or his subsequent degradation ; but he ignores both, or passes them by, as if they

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had no important bearing on his theme. And his whole representation of the manhood as compared with the childhood of the race, depends on the supposition that man in his original state requires restraints which are no longer necessary for us. And what does he mean to teach respecting our present state? Can he really mean that now, in this midway imperfect condition of our being, we are exempt from the obligations of God's revealed law, and independent even of the example of Christ? or that there is no external authority that ought to determine and regulate our faith and conduct: that we have no other governor or guide than that ignis fatuus, 'the light within?' Thus understood, his language would imply the wildest extreme of Antinomian licence, and might be applied to sanction the most fanatical delusion. True, the Apostle says, that 'we are not under the law, but under grace;' but as a divine, Dr Temple must know what all sound expositors have taught, that while we are not under the law as a covenant of works, we are still subject to the law as a rule of life, ' being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ;' and that while the law has no office in connection with our justification except that of convincing us of sin, and acting 'as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ that we may be justified by faith,' it is still the powerful means of our progressive sanctification-'Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth.' True, the Apostle says

again that 'the strength of sin is the law;' but he adds, 'Is the law sin? God forbid;' 'The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.' Yet good as it is in itself, it is 'weak through the flesh,' or the corrupt nature of man, and 'sin, taking occasion by the commandment,' worketh death in me by that which is good.' It thus becomes incidentally 'the strength of sin;' first, because by its condemning sentence it separates the soul from the favour and fellowship of God, and bars its return to Him until that sentence has been graciously cancelled; and, secondly, because a spiritual law, applied to a carnal heart, inflames and exasperates its corruptions, just as the purest light irritates a diseased eye.

What does revealed theology say, again, of authority in matters of faith? Does it recognise an authority such as is external and superior to the mind itself, as well as independent of it? Looking first to simple Theism, does it say with Dr Temple that 'the natural religions' were 'shadows projected by the spiritual light within shining on the dark problems without,' or does it recognise an external manifestation as well as an inward perception of truth? Does it not distinguish between 'the light of nature' considered as the percipient mind, and 'the works of creation and providence,' which manifest the wisdom, power, and goodness of God? 'The invisible things of God are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made, even His

eternal power and Godhead.' Looking again to the Christian scheme, does revealed religion teach with Dr Temple that in our present condition under the Gospel 'the faculty of faith has turned inwards, and cannot now accept any outer manifestation of the truth of God,' or that there is now no external law. but only an internal one, 'a voice which speaks within the conscience,' 'a law which is not imposed upon us, from without, but by our own enlightened will?' Does not philosophy itself teach us that all our mere natural knowledge depends on two factors. the one external, the other internal; and that there could be none whatever were the 'light within' isolated from the surrounding universe, which originates. in co-operation with the mind, those ideas on which the most abstract science and the most ideal creations alike depend? Is it not natural to suppose that our spiritual knowledge may be dependent on a similar condition, and require an external authority, such as the moral law, or the living Christ, or the everlasting Gospel, in addition to 'the light within,' even when that light has been kindled 'by the spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Christ?'

Dr Temple applies the internal law of which he speaks as a subjective test of every other, and as a supreme arbiter in matters of faith and practice. Referring to the law of God, as revealed by Moses, he says, 'that such commands should be sanctioned by Divine authority is utterly irreconcilable with our present feelings.' This of its ceremonial re-

quirements; and again of the moral, Ezckiel is said to 'appeal from the letter of the Second Commandment to the voice of natural equity;' as if Ezckiel had denied what the Second Commandment affirmed, and was not seeking to neutralize a popular perversion of it, which had become a proverb amongst unbelievers then as it still is in our own times. Ezckiel assuredly had no intention to place God's law at the bar of man's reason, or to make it subject to his 'enlightened will;' he knew, and spoke as if he knew, the great truth afterwards taught by an Apostle—'If thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge; there is One lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy.'

Viewed, again, in the light of authentic history, this theory of human progress will be found to break down utterly; for will the Master of Rugby, familiar as he must be with the past, since he writes on 'The Education of the World,' point out a single period at which the three influences of law, example, and principles were not, to a greater or less extent, in simultaneous action? He supposes example to be subsequent to law, and principles to be later than either; while each of the former is superseded in its turn, and nothing remains but the 'light within.' Whereas their influence has always been more or less felt at every stage; and so far from law and example being superseded at any time. our most mature principles may be said to grow out of them, and to be perpetually nourished by them;

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for the renewed soul is ever taking them up, as it were, into its own substance, just as a tree derives sap from the soil and air, and assimilates it for its own nutriment. The three stages of his process of development have been, to a large extent, not successive, but synchronous, just as Comte's three stages—the theological, metaphysical, and scientific -undoubtedly were. Dr Temple makes admissions on this point which are fatal to his whole reasoning. He says that 'Though the time for discipline is childhood, there is no precise line beyond which all discipline ceases;'--'the child, again, is not insensible to the influence of example,'-and 'the power of example probably never ceases during life.' He admits further 'that the outer law is often the best vehicle in which the inner law can be contained for the various purposes of life.' These admissions are illustrated by facts, for 'the irruption of barbarians carried the Church back to the childish stage,' and necessitated a 'return to the domain of outer law;' and the Papacy 'was, in fact, nothing more nor less than the old schoolmaster come back to bring some more scholars to Christ.' Now if, in the light of history, we find that law, example, and principle have been always to some extent co-existent, and that the progress of the Church itself has been subject to such alternations as rendered it necessary to have recourse again to the 'beggarly elements' of a former dispensation, why should it be thought that now, when 'that which is perfect'

has not yet come, we must be either exempt from the obligations of God's revealed law, or independent of the example of Christ as mirrored for our use in His blessed Gospel, or fit to govern ourselves solely by 'spirit and conscience,'—'the inner law which is not imposed upon us from without,' but accepted 'by our own enlightened will?'

Viewed, again, in the light of a sound doctrine of education, how does this theory accord with the experience of wise parents and teachers in the moral and spiritual training of the young? On this point, if on any other, Dr Temple might be expected to be a safe and enlightened guide. He has been placed at the head of one of the most important seminaries in England, and holds an office of deep and solemn responsibility. He must be presumed to have carefully studied the whole subject of education, since he is himself engaged in the work, and finds leisure, moreover, to speculate on the education of the world. Now, is there a wise Christian parent in England, really concerned for the moral and spiritual training of his children, who would apply to their education the principles which are unfolded in this essay? Indeed, if there were such a parent, he might well be puzzled, and Dr Temple himself might find it difficult, to say how they could be applied. difficulty lies here: these children were born, no doubt, when the race had reached an advanced stage of its education, but they were born as infants notwithstanding. The race to which they belong may

now be, in Dr Temple's sense of the phrase, 'a man:' but individually they must still 'speak as a child, and understand as a child, and think as a child;' so that, in their case, the analogy would seem to admit. and even to require, an inverse application; for if God in His wisdom subjected the race in its infancy to law, and taught it in its youth by example, these same means must still be employed in educating those who are born indeed in the manhood of humanity, but in a state of infancy, considered as individuals. To this extent at least the law must still be employed as an outer discipline, and the example as a lesson or model. And is it possible that when one of these children reaches the age of manhood, and is about to enter on 'thic battle of life,' the Master of Rugby could address him, as he left the school, in the language of his own theory, and say-'You have now passed from childhood to youth, and are no longer subject to any external law; you have passed from youth to manhood, and are now independent even of the great example: henceforth you must be governed and guided through the quicksands of life by no external authority, but by the "light within."

There is an interesting and instructive analogy between the case of a little child and that of a Christian disciple. The one, like the other, is 'a newborn babe,' 'born from above,'—he has spiritual instincts and appetites similar to those of infancy, 'he desires the sincere milk of the Word, that

he may grow thereby:'-he is born into similar relations, and these relations are connected with similar duties to those of a child: he is related to his heavenly, as the child is related to his earthly, Father, who is the object of filial reverence, affection, and trust; he is related to the whole family of God's children, as the child is related to brothers and sisters. There is an analogy also in respect to their condition and prospects, the one being the child of an earthly parent, advancing under his guidance towards manhood, and preparing for the business of time; the other a child of God. advancing also towards the manhood of his spiritual being, and preparing for his inheritance in heaven. With reference even to the Church, considered collectively, there is an analogy between its state of minority and pupilage under the preparatory dispensations of Divine truth, viewed in connection with its fuller development and freer spirit under the crowning dispensation of the fulness of time, and two corresponding stages in its progress onwards, -the present, as compared with the prospective, state of the Christian Church itself. These are real analogies, true to nature, recognised in Scripture, and fraught with profound instruction; but the analogy on which the Master of Rugby founds his theory of human progress is either utterly baseless, or, in so far as it has any foundation in fact, entirely inapplicable to the object for which it is employed.

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# 'BUNSEN'S BIBLICAL RESEARCHES.'\*

THE Vice-Principal of St David's College has not presented to his readers any systematic statement of his peculiar theory, nor has he condensed his speculations into any general summary of results, such as might have enabled them to frame for themselves a comprehensive conception of their scope and tendency as a scheme of religious thought. This may have arisen in part from the nature of his contribution to the volume, as a review of a long series of works by the late Baron Bunsen—comprising 'Egypt's Place in Universal History,' 'The Kingdom of God 'in History,' 'The Bible for the People,' and 'Hip-'polytus and his Age'-works which are sufficiently discursive in their range, as well as miscellaneous in their contents, to justify a reviewer in treating them in a somewhat similar style, while they touch the scheme of revealed religion at almost every point, and thus afford pegs to hang remarks upon in regard to every conceivable topic. But if this feature of Dr Williams' contribution deprives his readers of the benefit of a clear, connected, and By Rowland Williams, D.D., Vice-Principal and Professor of Hebrew, St David's College, Lampeter; Vicar of Broad Chalke, Wilts. London: Longman, Green, Longman, and

Roberts.

consecutive discussion of the subject, it supplies with ample facilities, of which he is not slow to himself, for raising difficulties, suggesting defaulties, suggesting details, while the whole question is not face discussed on its general merits; and dealing is in minute, captious criticism, which may shak faith of some, but can scarcely convince the ment of any.

We mean to say nothing of the 'genial b but to leave him in the hands of his less 1 critic: we speak only of the reviewer, and c speculations for which he has made himself pe ally responsible. Dr Williams can scarcely 1 to occupy the position of Bunsen, or to subm his turn, and with a good grace, to the ord public criticism. He has placed his materials l us in a fragmentary and disjointed shape, so apparently they are detached and unconnecte connected only by the slender thread supplie the line of Bunsen's inquiries. Accordingly, cursory perusal of the review, it might seem, a sight, as if there were no system whatever in it only a series of desultory and miscellaneous rem on closer inspection, however, it will be found the 'disjecta membra,' when brought together compared, have a real and even a close rel to one another, and that, like the 'dry bone Ezekiel's vision, they may be made to unite, as 'the bones came together, bone to his bone,' so

form, not indeed a warm flesh-and-blood shape having 'the breath of life in it,' yet a tolerably complete, and very ghastly, skeleton. There is a system of thought, whose parts are all mutually related and well adjusted together, underlying that miscellaneous accumulation in which it is embedded, but it must be exhimed from the covering which serves only to conceal its gigantic magnitude and proportions, and presented in its true form to the gaze of the world. We undertake to do the learned Vice-Principal this service, by bringing together the scattered parts of his theory, comparing them with one another, marking their mutual connection and interdependence, showing their strict logical coherence as constituent elements of one scheme of thought. and proving their common tendency towards the same result—a result which, as regards either the evidences or the doctrines of revealed religion, is neither more nor less than infidelity, scarcely concealed under the drapery of Scriptural terms used in an unscriptural sense.

This is a strong statement, and we feel that it can only be justified by evidence equally strong. In adducing that evidence, we propose to offer, in the first instance, in our own language, a clear expression of what we conceive to be the meaning of his leading statements, subjoining his own words as a test of our accuracy; and then to add some general remarks on his theory, as thus construed, and the manner in which he has attempted to establish it.

To avoid a wearisome multiplication of details, it may be convenient to arrange what we have to say, in merely expounding his theory, under three comprehensive heads: His views of the nature of revelation,—of the record in which it is contained,—and of the contents of that record.

The fundamental conception, which underlies his whole scheme of thought, is the idea which he has formed to himself of the nature of Revelation. conceives it to be, not the supernatural communication of truth from the mind of God to the mind of man, whether immediately, as in the case of prophets and apostles, or mediately, through the instrumentality of their preaching or writings, to the minds of their fellow-men; but the discovery or perception of truth merely by man's natural faculties, aided only by some undefined quickening of his own conscience and reason. It follows that no truth can be known except what is discoverable by the mere light of nature, and the exercise of his inherent powers. That this is his meaning appears from such statements as these:-- 'In the Bible as an expression of 'devout reason,' he (Bunsen) 'finds records of the 'spiritual giants whose experience generated the ' religious atmosphere we breathe.' 'There is hardly ' any greater question than whether history shows ' Almighty God to have trained mankind by a faith which has reason and conscience for its kindred, or by one to whose miraculous tests their pride 'must bow; i.a., whether His holy Spirit has acted

through the channels which His providence ordained, or whether it has departed from these so ' signally that comparative mistrust of them ever 'afterwards becomes a duty.' 'Conscience would 'not lose by exchanging that repressive idea of ' revelation which is put over against it as an adver-' sary, for one to which the echo of its best instincts 'should be the witness.' 'Thus considerations, 'religious and moral, no less than scientific and ' critical, have, where discussion was free, widened the idea of revelation for the old world, and deep-'ened it for ourselves.' This is the fundamental conception—the Towfor Joudos—of his whole theory, from which every other part of it may be logically deduced.

It follows naturally from this sweeping assumption, that there can be no supernatural inspiration; for, according to his idea, revelation and inspiration are one. We are aware that these two expressions are often used as if they were synonymous or convertible terms; but it conduces to clearness of thought to employ the term revelation to denote the objective presentation of supernatural truth to the mind; and the term inspiration to denote the influence, equally supernatural, which prompted prophets and apostles to impart the truth to others by their preaching or their writings. But as no supernatural truth was to be revealed, so no supernatural inspiration, such as is supposed to be peculiar to 'holy men of old who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,'

was needed. We are all alike, although not equally, inspired; St Paul was not more really, although he might be more thoroughly, filled with the Holy Ghost than is the Rev. Vicar of Broad Chalke. 'These truths the same spirit which spake of old 'speaks, through all variety of phrase, in ourselves.' If such a spirit did not dwell in the Church, the 'Bible would not be inspired; for the Bible is, 'before all things, the voice of the congregation.' We find our Prayer-book constructed on the idea 'of the Church being an inspired society.'

It follows that, revelation and inspiration being set aside, there can be no external authority in matters of faith—none, at least, that can impose any obligation either to believe or to obey. 'We trace 'principles of reason and right, to which our heart 'perpetually responds, and our response to which is 'a truer sign of faith than such deference to a sup- 'posed external authority as would quench these 'principles themselves.'

It follows, again, that instead of being subject to an external authority, we have, in our reason and conscience, a subjective test or supreme standard, which may be applied to the claims and the contents of any revelation whatever; and this conclusion may be deduced by inexorable logic from his fundamental conception, for if there be no revelation other or higher than that of reason and conscience, they may be applied to test what must be their own products. 'Hence we are obliged to assume in ourselves a 'verifying faculty.' A philosopher 'taking his 'stand on the genuine words of Holy Scripture, and 'the immutable laws of God to the human mind, 'may say, either the doctrine of the Trinity agrees 'with these tests, or, if you make it disagree, you 'make it false.'

It further follows naturally and inevitably, that if there be no other and higher revelation than that of reason and conscience, there can be no need and no reason to ascribe a supernatural character either to the scheme of Christianity, or to the credentials to which it has hitherto been supposed to appeal. Hence, speaking of 'our Biblical illustration from 'recent travellers,' he says, 'No single point has been discovered to tell in favour of an irrational 'supernaturalism, whereas numerous discoveries have confirmed the more liberal (not to say, rationalizing) criticism, which traces revelation historically within the sphere of nature and humanity.'

And what becomes of its supernatural credentials—its miracles and its prophecies? They must be admitted in words, but may be so explained as to be virtually and in effect explained away. In the case of miracles, the supernatural fact may be doubted, on the ground either of the constancy of physical nature, or the insufficiency of the historical evidence; but the moral lesson of the legend or myth remains as the perpetual heritage of the Church. 'Questions of miraculous interference do not turn merely

upon our conceptions of physical law, as unbroken. or of the Divine will as all-pervading; but they 'include inquiries into evidence, and must abide by verdicts on the age of records. Nor should the distinction between poetry and prose, and the possibility of imagination's allying itself with affec-' tion, be overlooked.' 'Those cases in which we ' accept the miracle for the sake of the moral lesson ' prove the ethical element to be the more funda-'mental.' In the case of prophecy, again,-the other great branch of the supernatural evidence,-we are to distinguish between the moral teaching of the prophets, and their supposed power to foresee and predict future events. The former may be received, while the latter is rejected. 'In our own country each successive defence of the prophecies, in pro-' portion as its author was able, detracted something from the extent of literal prognostication, and 'either laid stress on the moral element, or urged 'a second as the spiritual sense.' 'When so vast ' an induction on the destructive side has been gone through, it avails little that some passages may be doubtful, one perhaps in Zechariah and one in ' Isaiah, capable of being made directly Messianic, ' and a chapter possibly in Deuteronomy foreshadowing the final fall of Jerusalem. Even these few cases, the remnant of so much confident rhetoric, tend to melt, if they are not already melted, in the ' crucible of searching inquiry.' All the important topics hitherto noticed relate

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properly to the nature of revelation, and his conclusions in regard to them are natural and strictly logical deductions from that conception of it which lies at the foundation of his whole theory. course the same conception must affect all his views of the record in which revelation is contained: to others, it is 'the Word of God;' to him, it is 'the 'voice of the congregation.' 'On the side of external criticism we find the evidences of our can-' onical books, and of the patristic authors nearest to them, are sufficient to prove illustration in out-' ward act of principles perpetually true, but not ' adequate to guarantee narratives inherently in-' credible, or precepts evidently wrong. Hence we ' we are obliged to assume in ourselves a verifying faculty. . . . It is not our part to dictate to 'Almighty God that He ought to have spared us this strain upon our consciences, nor, in giving us 'through His Son a deeper revelation of His own ' presence, was He bound to accompany His gift by 'a special form of record.' Still, if the Bible contained any revelation from God, in the usual sense of that expression as denoting a communication of truth from the mind of God to the mind of man through the channel of this record, it must be held to be, to that extent, an external and authoritative rule of faith and practice; and however difficult it might be, on the supposition of its partial inspiration, to separate the Divine from the human element, or to winnow the wheat from the chaff, we should

be bound to make the attempt, were we not relieved by the assurance that 'the Bible is, before all things, 'the voice of the congregation.' And yet he would not be held to disparage the Bible; far from it, for he speaks of those 'to whom the Bible is dear for 'the truth's sake,'—as dear perhaps as any other book, such as those of Luther and Milton, Plato and Shakspere, who were not 'uninspired.' He goes even so far as to reprove Bunsen for asking, 'How 'long shall we bear the fiction of an external revelation?' and ventures to say, with unusual mildness, 'There will be some who think this language too 'vehement for good taste!'

If it fares thus with the credentials and the record of revelation, it can scarcely surprise us to find that all the highest and most peculiar truths of Christianity-its most precious contents-are either thrown to the winds or dexterously explained away. This is the natural consequence of his fundamental assumption; for if there be no revelation of truth on the part God, why should there be the submission of faith on the part of man? Take the doctrine of the fall: 'The fall of Adam represents to him '(Bunsen) ideally the circumscription of our spirits in limits of flesh and time, and practically the selfish 'nature with which we fall from the likeness of ' God, which should be fulfilled in man.' Take the doctrine of original sin: 'When it (baptism) became twisted into a false analogy with circum-'cision, the rite degenerated into a magical form,

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' and the Augustinian notion of a curse inherited by 'infants was developed in connection with it.' 'He ' (Bunsen) evidently could not state original sin in 'so exaggerated a form as to make the design of 'God altered by the first agents in His creation. ' or to destroy the notion of moral choice and the ' foundation of ethics.' Take the doctrine of the incarnation: 'The incarnation becomes with our author ' (Bunsen) as purely spiritual as it was with St Paul. 'The son of David by birth is the Son of God by 'the Spirit of holiness. What is flesh is born of 'flesh; what is spirit is born of spirit.' 'In Him he 'finds brought to perfection that religious idea ' which is the thought of the Eternal, without con-"formity to which our souls cannot be saved from 'evil.' 'This Divine consciousness or wisdom, con-' substantial with the Eternal Will, becoming per-' sonal in the Son of Man, is the express image of the Father; and Jesus actually, but also mankind ' ideally, is the Son of God. If all this has a Sabel-' lian or almost a Brahminical sound,' etc. Take the doctrine of the Trinity: 'Being, becoming, ' and animating; or substance, thinking, and con-'scious life, are expressions of a Triad, which may be also represented as will, wisdom, and love; as ' light, radiance, and warmth; as fountain, stream, ' and united flow; as mind, thought, and conscious-'ness; as person, word, and life; as Father, Son, 'and Spirit!' Take his doctrine of sacrifice: 'Sac-' rifice, with the Psalmist, meant not the goats' or

' heifers' blood-shedding, but the contrite heart ex-' pressed by it.' Take his doctrine of propitiation and atonement: 'Propitiation would be the recovery of that peace which cannot be while sin divides us ' from the Searcher of hearts.' 'This recognition of 'Christ as the moral Saviour of mankind may seem to some Baron Bunsen's most obvious claim to the 'name of Christian.' Take his doctrine of justification by faith: 'Why may not justification by faith have meant the peace of mind, or sense of Divine approval, which comes of trust in a righteous 'God, rather than a fiction of merit by transfer? 4. . . Faith would be opposed not to the good deeds which conscience requires, but to 'works of appeasement by ritual. Justification would be neither an arbitary ground of confidence, one a reward upon condition of our disclaiming 'merit, but rather a verdict of forgiveness upon our ' repentance, and of acceptance upon the offering of our hearts.'

Such are some of the articles of his creed,—for creed it is, however he may declaim against authorized formularies, and one which lays down propositions quite as definite in themselves, and quite as dogmatic in his form of stating them, as are the Articles of the Church of England, although it might be difficult to discover any other resemblance between them. But in deference to his aversion for such formularies, let us call them the results of his critical and philosophic speculations. They are the

constituent parts of a theory, all springing naturally from his fundamental conception of the nature of revelation, all bearing a close relation to one another, and reasoned out by a rigorous logic. The mere statement of such a theory should be a sufficient exposure of it; but we may briefly indicate, although within our limits, we cannot fully discuss, the objections to which it is liable.

In respect to its fundamental assumption, that revelation cannot consist in a communication of truth ab extra, but must be resolved into the natural. perhaps quickened, action of man's inherent powers of reason and conscience—it is utterly unphilosophical, and runs counter to all the analogies supplied by God's method of imparting even our common secular knowledge. God is the revealer of natural truth through the medium of His works, not less than of spiritual truth through the medium of His Word; and His Word holds the same place with reference to the one, which is held by His works with reference to the other. In both there is an external manifestation, as well as an internal faculty of perception, and in both the standard or rule of judgment is independent of our mind, and possesses a certain authority over it. Man is but 'the minister and ' interpreter' of nature in the domain of science, and must be content to learn every lesson which she teaches with the docility of 'a little child.' Without some information conveyed to the mind ab extra, neither reason nor conscience could come into operation at all. If this be true of our common secular knowledge, it is equally true of our first and simplest notions of natural religion; for, besides 'the light of nature,' or the internal faculties of reason and conscience, there is an external manifestation of God in His works of creation and providence. If this be God's method of instructing men in secular knowledge and natural religion, does not analogy teach us to expect some similar provision for imparting the knowledge of spiritual truth, some medium through which God will convey His instruction and make known His supreme will? And what other medium or provision can be conceived of than His blessed Word?\*

Besides being unphilosophical, his theory is unscriptural. The sacred writers tell us that 'God' has magnified His Word above all His name'—that it is the brightest manifestation, except that in the person of His Incarnate Son, which He has ever made of His character and will; that it contains many truths which could neither be discovered by the unaided light of nature, nor even proved, when revealed, otherwise than by the authority of the Revealer; that it contains 'exceeding great and pre'cious promises,' which could convey no comfort unless they were known to rest on the word, and even on the oath, of Him who cannot lie; and that for all our knowledge of 'the will of God for our salvation' we must depend, not on our own reason and con-

Appendix, Note A.

science, but on 'the Word of Truth, the Gospel of 'Salvation.'

The theory is unchristian-by which we mean that it is opposed to the express teaching of our Lord. In reading these dreary speculations, it has often occurred to us to ask-'What think ye of 'Christ?' Was He a teacher sent from God, was He the Son of God Himself? What, then, did Christ teach on these points? Did IIe ever speak of the narrative of the creation as a myth, or of that of the fall as an allegory? Did He ever deny the predictive character of ancient prophecy? On the contrary, did He not say of Moses, 'He wrote of ' Me,' and beginning at Moses and all the prophets, did He not expound to His disciples 'the things concerning Himself?' Did He work real or pretended miracles? What says Christ the Lord? should be the question of every one worthy to bear His name, or to hold office in His Church; and Christ's answer should settle every difficulty. 'I 'know,' says the noble Arnold, 'Christ to have been 'so wise, and so loving to men, that I am sure I ' may trust His word; and that what was entirely 'agreeable to His sense of justice and goodness 'cannot, unless through my own defect, be other-' wise than agreeable to mine.'

The theory is only an English form of the exploded neology of Germany, in which the naturalism of Paulus and De Wette is strangely blended with the mythical theory of Strauss. It is coming into fashion here, when all the noblest spirits there—Neander and Tholuck, Olshausen, Hengstenberg, Stier, Baumgarten, and many more—have been struggling for years to free their fatherland from its blighting influence. Germany has cast it off as 'a filthy garment,' and is beginning to be clothed with 'a change of raiment.' Like Teufelsdröckh, in 'Sartor Resartus,' the Vice-Principal of St David's has an eye to the 'old clothes:' is he quite sure that they would be appropriate and becoming under the robes and surplice of a dignified clergyman of the Church of England?

#### No. III.

## 'THE STUDY OF THE EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.'\*

THE author of this Essay is no longer in the midst of us. He has been removed by the hand of death. He cannot now be brought in person before the bar of public opinion, nor is he amenable to any earthly tribunal; he can be judged only by Him who is 'Lord of the conscience.' But his writings remain, and must exert some influence, for good or for evil, long after his removal from the busy haunts of men; and we owe a duty to the living as well as to the dead,-to those who are entering on the thorny path of life, not less than to the memory of those who have already finished their course. That duty must be faithfully discharged, on the principle of strict and impartial justice, although it may well be undertaken with that chastened spirit which his recent removal from the midst of us is fitted to produce, and conducted with that forbearance which every generous mind will feel to be due in the case of one who is no longer present to defend himself. Our remarks, therefore, must relate exclusively to his works, with-

By Baden Powell, M.A., F.R.S., Savilian Professor of Geometry in the University of Oxford.

out the slightest reference to his previous position or character as a man, or as a minister of the Church of England.

Looking, then, to this Essay, and viewing it in the light which is reflected on it by several previous works from the same pen on similar or cognate topics of inquiry, it will be our object to analyse and arrange its very miscellaneous and somewhat contradictory contents, to ascertain and place clearly before our readers the ground principles on which his argument depends, and to enable them to form a just estimate of the amount of weight which belongs to it as a reason for discrediting or rejecting the whole miraculous evidence of Christianity.

Adopting Professor Powell's own division of his Essay into two parts—the argument for miracles, and the argument from miracles—our attention will be directed, under the first, to the nature, possibility, and credibility of Divine supernatural interpositions; and, under the second, to the kind and amount of evidence which they are capable of yielding in support of those doctrines in attestation of which they were wrought. In both departments of the inquiry it will be our honest aim to select the strongest points of his case, and to place them clearly before the minds of our readers, while we omit, or pass by with slight comment, many miscellaneous observations which seem to us to have little direct bearing on the settlement of the point at issue.

Before entering on the formal discussion of his

two heads, he offers some preliminary remarks designed to prepare the way for it, by showing, on the one hand, the lawfulness and expediency of instituting an inquiry on the subject, and the spirit and temper, on the other, in which it should be conducted. In illustrating the expediency of such an inquiry, he says, speaking of 'the evidences of 'Revelation,' that 'unlike the essential doctrines of 'Christianity, "the same yesterday, and to-day, and " for ever," these external accessories constitute a 'subject which of necessity is perpetually taking ' somewhat at least of a new form, with the succes-' sive phases of opinion and knowledge.' In these words he expressly admits that there are certain doctrines which are essential to Christianity, and that these doctrines are immutable amidst all the vicissitudes of human opinion; and although he does not specify what they are—and had he done so would probably have omitted some which appear to us to be its peculiar and most precious discoveriesthe admission is a large one coming from any member of the school to which he belonged. But when he contrasts these essential doctrines with the 'evi-'dences,' as if the latter were merely 'external 'accessories' of Revelation, it must be kept in mind that, according to the scheme adopted by Omniscient ... Wisdom, the evidences have been, to a large extent, incorporated with the truths of religion in the same volume, and that they have been so interwoven with its structure as to be regarded by Mr Powell himself

as credenda, while he rejects them as credentials. They cannot, therefore, be mere external accessories. Yet there is room for a distinction, if not between the 'essential doctrines' and the evidences considered as 'external accessories,' yet between the substance and the form of the evidences themselves: and this distinction is well drawn by the President Riambourg, when treating of the 'direction which 'should now be given to Christian apologetics;' he shows that, while the great branches of the evidence remain at all times substantially the same—the Divine attestations to the truth by miracles and prophecy-yet they may, and should, be adapted in point of form to the peculiar exigencies and modes of thought of each succeeding age. This would sufficiently justify Mr Powell in proposing 'to review the condition in which the discussion stands, and to ascertain whether it has kept pace with the 'progressive enlightenment of the present times,' even although there were no such distinction as he supposes to subsist between the essential doctrines and the evidences of revealed religion.

In regard to the spirit in which the inquiry should be prosecuted, we have little to object to Professor Powell's description of it; and it gives us pleasure to add that the present Essay, although far from being a perfect exemplification of that spirit, comes much nearer to it than most of his recent writings, as if the searching and, perhaps, severe criticism to which they were subjected had served in some

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measure, if not to shake his convictions, at least to subdue his tone and ameliorate his style. We cannot concur with him however, when he speaks as if the unbeliever, or the man who agitates questions which may shake the faith of others, is innocent of all moral blame, and as if any censure pronounced upon him would imply that his instructor was, or thought himself to be, 'omniscient and infallible.'

Drawing nearer to the main subject of his Essay, he lays down another distinction, which has great prominence given to it in his previous writings, and which plays an important rôle in his subsequent reasonings-the radical distinction between reason and faith. He speaks of 'a wide distinction between the influences of feeling and those of reason; the impressions of conscience and the deductions of 'intellect; the dictations of moral and religious ' sense, and the conclusions from evidence, in refer-' ence especially to the questions agitated as to the ' grounds of belief in Divine revelation;' and says: - When reference is made to matters of external ' fact (insisted on as such), it is obvious that reason ' and intellect can alone be the proper judges of the 'evidence of such facts. When, on the other hand, ' the question may be as to points of moral or reli-' gious doctrine, it is equally clear other and higher ... ' grounds of judgment and conviction must be appealed to.' That we may see the use which he means to make of this distinction, we must look forward to its application in the progress of his argument; and

we shall find that it is greatly more important than at first sight it may seem to be. It is applied to prove that faith is independent of the intellect, and can dispense, of course, with all miraculous evidence, and every kind of external attestation or authority. 'We ' must recognise both the due claims of science to decide on points properly belonging to the world of matter, and the independence of such considerations which characterizes the disclosure of spiritual 'truth, as such.' 'Beyond the domain of physical ' causation, and the possible conceptions of intellect and knowledge, there lies open the boundless region of spiritual things, which is the sole dominion of And while intellect and philosophy are ' faith. compelled to disown the recognition of anything in ' the world of matter at variance with the first principle of the laws of matter—the universal order ' and indissoluble unity of physical causes—they are ' the more ready to admit the higher claim of Divine 'mysteries in the invisible and spiritual world.' He admits—and the admission is one which his clerical associates should lay to heart—that 'the idea of a ' positive external Divine revelation has formed the ' very basis of all hitherto received systems of Chris-'tian belief;' but contends that it must now be abandoned, and that religion must be withdrawn entirely from the province of reason, and transferred to the region of faith. Statements like these generally contain some small portion of truth to which they owe all their seeming plausibility; but separate

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the truth from the error with which it is associated. and the error will be divested at once of its verisimilitude; winnow the wheat from the chaff, and a mere puff will scatter the chaff to the winds. It is true that there is a difference between reason and faith, and on this account it is right and even necessary to distinguish the one from the other; it is not true that there is no necessary relation or connection between the two, or that it is either lawful or safe, even if it were possible, to effect a divorce between them. It is true that reason may exist and operate independently of faith, and apart from it; it is not true that faith, in the Scriptural sense of that expression, can be severed from knowledge, or exercised apart from our knowing faculties. Saving faith, such as is required in the Gospel, implies more than a mere intellectual assent to the historical truth of Christianity, or to a series of doctrinal propositions; it consists essentially in a cordial consent to the revealed method of reconciliation, and an actual closing with Christ as our own Saviour; for by faith 'we receive and rest 'upon Christ alone for salvation, as He is freely 'offered to us in the Gospel.' But, whatever else may be involved in it, it clearly presupposes belief. and belief again presupposes knowledge of the truth; and, considered in its relation to the truth, it is distinguished from our other beliefs mainly by this, that it receives a Divine testimony on the authority of the revealer. To identify reason with

faith were to adopt the theory of Rationalism; to divorce faith from reason were to adopt either the Popish doctrine of a blind and implicit belief, such as accords with the maxim that 'ignorance is the ' mother of devotion,'-or the equally fanatical doctrine of mysticism, which teaches that men are to be guided only by 'the light within,' and substitutes what may be the mere delusions of 'private 'spirits' for 'the oracles of God,' as the standard of faith and duty. We have no sympathy with any attempt to relegate religion to any other than our common cognitive faculties; it is only necessary that the same faculties which are conversant with all other truth should be instructed by the Word, and enlightened by the Spirit, of God, to render them safe guides in the path of religious While we guard against the abuse, we would equally vindicate the legitimate use, of reason in matters of faith, and protest against that bastard humility which scepticism sometimes assumes when it represents our noblest faculties as incapable of receiving even Divine instruction, and professes that reason, however it may be aided by revelation, can never soar into the region of faith. And we are the less disposed to defer to this mystical doctrine. even when it is propounded by philosophers and divines, both because it has been a fertile source of fanatical delusion at various eras in the history of the Church, and also because it has been employed by many avowed sceptics to undermine the founda-

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tions of all religion. It was so employed by Hume. when, at the close of his 'Essay on Miracles,' he says in words which were intended for irony-'We ' may conclude that the Christian religion not only ' was at first attended with miracles, but even at this 'day cannot be believed by any reasonable person Mere reason is insufficient to conwithout one. 'vince us of its veracity; and whoever is moved by faith to assent to it is conscious of a continued ' miracle in his own person, which subverts all the ' principles of his understanding, and gives him a determination to believe what is most contrary to ' custom and experience;' and again, also in his 'Essay on Miracles'-'I am the better pleased with ' the method of reasoning here delivered, as I think ' it may serve to confound those dangerous friends or disguised enemies to the Christian religion who ' have undertaken to defend it by the principles of 'human reason. Our most holy religion is founded on faith, not on reason; and it is a sure method ' of exposing it to put it to such a trial as it is by 'no means fitted to endure.' So was it employed also by the infidel author of 'Christianity not Founded 'on Argument;' a title which would be a true expression of an important fact, were it intended merely to announce that Christianity must rest on the authority of revelation, since it is neither discoverable by the light of nature, nor capable even of being proved by it, when revealed, otherwise than by the aid of those supernatural attestations to

which it appeals; but which must be regarded in a very different light when the argument is directed to prove that Christian faith can have no connection with the exercise of human reason.

These remarks will not be found irrelevant to the main argument of Professor Powell, which must now engage our attention. The fundamental conception on which it rests is that of the 'unity' and 'order' of nature, and it consists in the assumption that every question as to miraculous or supernatural interposition is effectually and for ever foreclosed by the large induction which establishes the uniformity of natural laws. 'The question agitated is not that of 'mere testimony, of its value, or of its failures; it refers to those antecedent considerations which must ' govern our entire view of the subject, and which being dependent on higher laws of belief, must be ' paramount to all attestation, or rather belong to a 'province distinct from it.' 'In an age of physical ' research like the present, all highly cultivated 'minds and duly advanced intellects have imbibed, 'more or less, the lessons of the inductive philo-'sophy, and have, at least in some measure, learned to appreciate the grand foundation principle of uni-'versal law; to recognise the impossibility even of ' any two material atoms subsisting together without 'a determinate relation,' etc. 'The essential question of miracles stands quite apart from any consideration of testimony; the question would remain the same if we had the evidence of our own senses to

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'a miracle.' In short, miracles are antecedently and intrinsically incredible, and incapable of proof, whether by ocular evidence or the strongest testimony, on account simply of the antecedent presumption against them, arising from the established order of physical causes.

This, it must be owned, is a sweeping conclusion. deduced as it is, not from any à priori law of thought. but from the results of induction, which aims only at ascertaining the facts and laws of nature, but never professes to determine what may or may not possibly be. Even in the most advanced of the inductive sciences, it is generally understood that their conclusions are provisional only, and liable to be modified by any new cases that may come to our knowledge. We think that those who have most thoroughly mastered the theory and rationale of the inductive process, will agree with us in saying that Professor Powell has not duly considered the limits within which alone its results can be accepted as absolutely sure. We cannot, within our assigned limits, discuss the general question which is thus raised: we content ourselves, therefore, with referring our readers to two articles in the North British Review. while we undertake to show that on one important point he is flatly contradicted by John Stuart Mill, and that on two others he has gone far beyond the scepticism of Hume himself.

His argument evidently proceeds on the supposi-

<sup>\*</sup> No. 62, Art 4 No. 65, Art 9, and Note B.

tion that there are no other agencies in the universe that are capable of effecting physical changes except the forces which are at work in the world of matter, -a supposition strange enough when it is remembered that there are free, intelligent, and voluntary agents who are capable of changing the state of physical things, and bending them to the accomplishment of their designs. Men themselves have this power to a limited extent through the inscrutable connection subsisting between soul and body: and why may not a higher degree of the same power belong to angels, and a higher still to God, the Lord But once admit these agencies as capable of of all? effecting physical changes, and his whole argument, in so far as it rests on invariable order maintained by purely physical causes, falls to the ground. here no violence would be done to the universal law of causation; there would only be the introduction of new antecedents, followed according to that law with new consequents. He denies this, but it is admitted by a far higher authority on the philosophy of induction. 'In order that any alleged fact,' says Mr Mill, 'should be contradictory to a law of causation, the allegation must be, not simply that the cause existed without being followed by the ' effect, for that would be no uncommon occurrence, but that this happened in the absence of any adequate counteracting cause. Now, in the case of an ' alleged miracle, the assertion is the exact opposite of this. It is that the effect was defeated, not in

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' the absence, but in consequence, of a counteracting 'cause, viz., a direct interposition of an act of the will of some being who has power over nature; 'and in particular of a Being whose will, having 'originally endowed all the causes with the powers by which they produce their effects, may well be 'supposed able to counteract them. A miracle, as 'was justly remarked by (Dr Thomas) Brown, is no 'contradiction to the law of cause and effect; it is a 'new effect, supposed to be produced by the intro-'duction of a new cause. Of the adequacy of that 'cause, if it exist, there can be no doubt.'

Professor Powell denics that any conceivable kind or amount of testimony could make it reasonable to believe in the occurrence of a miracle, and herein goes far beyond the utmost scepticism of Hurae. The latter lays down his position as 'a 'general maxim' in these terms:- 'That no tes-'timony is sufficient to establish a miracle, unless the testimony be of such a kind that its falsehood ' would be more miraculous than the fact which it 'endeavours to establish;' and even this maxim is still further limited when he adds, 'that no human testimony can have such force as to prove a mi-' racle, and make it a just foundation for any system ' of religion. I beg the limitations here made may ' be marked when I say, that a miracle can never be 'proved so as to be the foundation of a system of 'religion. For I own that, otherwise, there may 'possibly be miracles, or violations of the usual

'course of nature, of such a kind as to admit of 'proof from human testimony.' Professor Powell might have sought to evade this strong statement by admitting that the fact might be proved, but not the fact qua miracle; but this quibble will meet us as we advance.

Professor Powell denies that we should or could believe in miracles were they exhibited before our eyes. And here, again, he far outruns the scepticism of Hume and Laplace. The former, in his Essay, supposes a case, and admits that he could not but believe in the occurrence of a miracle: and the latter says-'If we ourselves had been spectators of such an event, we should not believe our own eyes till we had scrupulously examined all the circumstances, and assured ourselves that there was no trick or deception. After such an examination we should not hesitate to admit it, not-' withstanding its great improbability, and no one ' would have recourse to an inversion of the laws of ' vision in order to account for it.' We cannot enlarge on Professor Powell's sketch

We cannot enlarge on Professor Powell's sketch of the history of Apologetics in England; we shall only say that it contains many gross misstatements and misrepresentations, without having the merit of being consistent with itself. When he says that the study of 'Paley's Evidences' has been superseded at the universities by that of 'Butler's Analogy,' we can only express our fervent hope that there is no ground for the insinuated charge that the historical

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evidence has fallen into desuetude at Oxford and Cambridge. If it be so, we can have no reason to be surprised at the infidel tendencies which have recently appeared among not a few who received their education at these ancient scats of learning; and we are very sure that they are departing in this from the good old paths of the Church of England, while every Nonconformist college in Britain reckons it indispensable to provide for theological students a thorough course of apologetic, as well as of systematic and exegetic theology.

Professor Powell thinks he can deny the truth of miracles without impeaching the honesty of the witnesses by whom they are attested. This would be a hard task in the case of the Jews at Sinai or in the wilderness; it would be equally hard in the case of the primitive Christians, and especially in the case of the Apostles, who not only saw, but professed also to work, miracles; but it would be harder still-with reverence be it said-in the case of our Lord Himself. Can we deny the truth of the Gospel miracles without impeaching the character of Him who not only professed to work them, but promised to confer the power of working them on His commissioned servants? Again we say-for this is, and ever must be, the ultimate issue,- What think ye of Christ?' The question must be faced, and there must be no equivocation here. Did He work miracles, yea or no? If He did, then in whose name, and by what authority? If He did not, and

yet professed to do it, and to confer miraculous powers on His Apostles, then infidels may be right—they are, at least, self-consistent; but these clergymen are assuredly wrong.

He thinks, however, that the sensible fact, which alone is attested, may be admitted, while its supernatural or miraculous character is doubted or denied: and is at great pains to show that testimony relates only to the sensible fact, while its supernatural character is nothing more than an inference. This is far from being an original discovery; it is only a part of the general doctrine which teaches us to regard testimony, in all cases, as merely a phenomenon to be accounted for, and either to receive or to reject it, according as its truth or its falsehood may be found to accord best with all the known circumstances of the case. Those who are familiar with the teaching of Archbishop Whately on this subject,\* will see at once that there is nothing peculiar, in this respect, in the case of miracles,—unless it be that the evidence was so strong as to dissipate the incredulity arising in the minds of the eye-witnesses from the extraordinary character of the events which they attest, to dispel their inveterate perjudice against such a Messiah as disappointed all their preconceived expectations, and to nerve them for persecution and martyrdom, in openly proclaiming what they had seen and heard. But, leaving the abstract question, let us look to particular facts:

In the case of prophecy, no miracle is directly attested; one class of witnesses afford evidence that certain predictions were uttered at a given time: another class of witnesses afford evidence that certain events occurred several hundred years afterwards: both attest simple facts, and neither of these facts is in itself necessarily miraculous; yet, on comparing the predictions with the events, a miracle emerges, which is not directly attested as such, but is seen to possess that character as soon as the facts are ascertained; and who will say that this inference—for it is an inference—can be honestly evaded or denied? In the case of our Lord, again, was the sensible fact of His resurrection, which is attested by eye-witnesses, of such a nature as to leave any room for doubt as to its being a supernatural event, if it really occurred? The only question which most men will think of raising relates to the matter of fact: Did Christ rise from the dead, yea or no? For this fact being ascertained, there can be no doubt of its miraculous character.

The second part of Professor Powell's Essay, the argument from miracles, need not detain us long; indeed, it is subordinate to the first, and is not kept very clearly distinct from it. He affirms that the evidential force of miracles is wholly relative to the apprehensions of those to whom they are addressed, a statement which is true in one sense but false in another—true in so far as it implies merely that their effect will depend to a large extent on our

state of mind, but false if it be meant to declare that they can be received as a valid evidence only by the ignorant and unlearned. He speaks of our Lord's reference to His own miracles as only a secondary and subsidiary proof of His claims. Every reader of the New Testament can judge for himself on this point; 'The works which the Father hath given Me ' to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of ' Me that the Father hath sent Me.' Sometimes he speaks as if miracles might be useful in founding a faith; but, having fulfilled this function, could be of no further use, in after times, in propagating the truth or in confirming the faith of the Church. But, being incorporated in the sacred narrative, they must be held to be of permanent value, and cannot be called in question or set aside without undermining the very foundations of our faith. He admits, indeed, that they are still credenda, while he denies them to be credentials; but they are both, and the distinction between these two aspects of the same · facts is a mere subterfuge, serving only to conceal the infidelity which takes refuge under it. denying them to be credentials, what does he make of them considered as mere credenda? Are they miracles or myths? Mark his own significant words: 'Miraculous narratives become invested with the character of articles of faith, if they be accepted in 'a less positive and certain light, or perhaps as ' involving more or less of the parabolic or mythic ' character; or, at any rate, as received in connection

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'with, and for the sake of, the doctrine inculcated.'
The whole miraculous evidence of Christianity is utterly set aside, and Christianity itself must share the same fate, considered as a supernatural external revelation of the mind and will of God.

#### No. IV.

# 'SÉANCES HISTORIQUES DE GENÈVE— THE NATIONAL CHURCH.'\*

MR WILSON invites the attention of his readers to what may be called the ecclesiastical, as distinguished from the strictly theological aspect of the movement which is now in progress within the pale of the Church of England. His essay (for it cannot be called a review) seems to have been suggested by the report of certain conferences, held in the ancient city of Geneva, for the discussion of questions bearing on the history of religion, in the course of which a difference of opinion arose between the Comte de Gasparin and M. Bungener respecting the best condition of the Church—the one advocating voluntary churches, such as existed in primitive times, before the age of Constantine; the latter, national churches incorporated with the State, and established by law. Mr Wilson gives in his decided adhesion to the views of M. Bungener, and takes occasion to hang on this peg a prolix and somewhat prosy dissertation on national establishments. Assuredly we shall not be tempted, at this time of day, to revive the voluntary controversy; and, did his paper contain nothing

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else than a discussion of that question, we should not have been induced to notice it all. But it contains much more. It may be regarded as the manifesto of the School to which he belongs, in exposition of their views as to their position in relation to the Church whose articles they have signed, and whose authorities they are bound to obey; and it affords sufficiently clear indications both of the uneasiness which they feel under the restraints to which they are subject, and of the practical policy which they mean to pursue, with a view to their being liberated from these restraints, while they still retain office in the Established Church. And more than this, it comes also on the domain of theology, and advocates the abolition of subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles, not on the ground which might be .taken, that the articles being sound and good in themselves. the mere subscription of them affords an insufficient guarantee for the soundness of the Church's teachers: but on the express allegation that the articles are no longer tenable, that they are at variance with the convictions of many who have nevertheless subscribed them, and that they run counter to the more recent results of critical and theological investiga-For this reason he connects the discussion of a question of mere ecclesiastical polity with the exposition of his views on some of the most important doctrinal articles of faith; and as these are at once more important in themselves than any matter of mere external organisation, and more closely connected with the train of our previous reasonings, we propose to give them the precedence in our present notice, with the view of bringing out the strong family likeness which subsists, in this respect, between Mr Wilson's paper and the other members of the series to which it belongs.

Omitting historical details, and looking to the main substance and scope of his reasonings, four distinct topics claim our serious consideration,—his views of a Divine revelation, and of the inspiration and authority of the record which contains it; and his views of the interpretation of Scripture—these belong to theology: then his views of the constitution of the Church in general, and of subscription to the articles of the Church of England in particular,—these belong to the head of ecclesiastical polity.

In regard to his views of a Divine supernatural revelation, and of the inspiration and authority of the sacred record, his statements are too explicit to leave the slightest room for doubt. They are all cast in the mould, and bear the legible impress of the 'negative theology.' 'They (our own Church'men) should endeavour to supply to the negative 'theologian some positive elements in Christianity, on grounds more sure to him than the assumption of an objective faith "once delivered to the saints," which he cannot identify with the creed of any Church as yet known to him.' He speaks of those of the clergy as blame-worthy, 'who consider the 'Church of Christ to be founded, as a society, on

' the possession of an abstractedly true and super-'naturally communicated speculation concerning 'God, rather than upon the manifestation of a ' divine life in man.' And he goes so far as to say, 'Jesus Christ has not revealed His religion as a ' theology of the intellect, or as an historical faith.' Poor Blanco White, in his correspondence with James Martineau, has said, that 'the moment the ' name Christian is made necessarily to contain in ' its signification belief in certain historical or meta-' physical propositions, that moment the name it-'self becomes a creed—the length of that creed is of little consequence; but who could have expected a similar mode of reasoning on the part of a minister of the Church of England, who has subscribed the Thirty-nine Articles?

If an objective revelation is set aside, we cannot expect the inspiration of Holy Scripture to be preserved; and accordingly we are told, that—'In that which may be considered the pivot article of the Church, this expression (the Word of God) does not occur, but only "Holy Scripture," "Canonical Books," "Old and New Testaments." It contains no declaration of the Bible being throughout super'naturally suggested, nor any intimation as to which portions of it were owing to a special Divine illumination, nor the slightest attempt at defining inspiration, whether mediate or immediate;—whether through, or beside, or overruling the natural faculties of the subject of it;—not the least hint of the

' relation between the Divine and human elements ' in the composition of the biblical books.' further told of the Bible, that 'the Word of God' is ' a phrase which begs many a question when applied to the canonical books of the Old and New Testa-'ments,—a phrase which is never applied to them by any of the Scriptural authors, and which, according to Protestant principles, never could be 'applied to them by any sufficient authority from 'without.' But if the inspiration of Scripture be partial and not plenary; if the Bible cannot be called 'the Word of God,' although it may possibly contain something of the Divine mixed with the human, there must needs be a test of some kind by which the gold may be distinguished from the dross, a method of winnowing the wheat from the chaff; and what other criterion can be named than the subjective test of our own reason and conscience? And, accordingly, this test is applied to the doctrine of Scripture respecting the state and prospects of the heathen world, as if there would be a want of equity in God's leaving them without the means of salvation, although no such means were provided for the angels 'who kept not their first estate;' and those who are able to do so are exhorted 'to lead the less educated to distinguish between the different kinds of words which it (Scripture) contains,-between the dark patches of human passion and error which form a partial crust upon it, and the bright centre of spiritual truth within.' But

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how is this to be done? Why, by the application of the subjective test; it is quite sufficient to set aside many of what are commonly supposed to be the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel. The 'Jews did' not perceive that the attribution of wrath and 'jealousy to their God could only be by a figure of 'speech; and, what is worse, it is difficult to persuade many Christians of the same thing, and 'solemn inferences from the figurative expressions of the Hebrew literature have been crystallised into Christian doctrine. With respect to the moral 'treatment of His creatures by Almighty God, all men, in different degrees, are able to be judges of the representations made of it by reason of the moral sense which He has given them.'

But, should the subjective test prove inadequate to the occasion, another sure and infallible expedient is provided for our relief; it consists in a new method of interpretation, and depends on what is called the principle of 'ideology.' Are our readers at a loss to attach a definite idea to the phrase, or are they dreaming of the organ of ideality? We shall leave the author to explain his own meaning in his own words:—'The ideal method is applicable in two 'ways; both in giving account of the origin of parts 'of Scripture, and also in explanation of Scripture.' The application of ideology to the interpretation of 'Scripture, to the doctrines of Christianity, to the 'formularies of the Church, may undoubtedly be 'carried to an excess—may be pushed so far as to

leave in the sacred records no historical residue whatever.' 'An example of the critical ideology carried to excess is that of Strauss, which resolves ' into an ideal the whole of the historical and doc-'trinal person of Jesus.' 'But it by no means fol-4 lows, because Strauss has substituted a mere shadow ' for the Jesus of the Evangelists, that there are not traits in the Scriptural person of Jesus which are better explained by referring them to an ideal than ' an historical origin; and, without falling into fanci-'ful exegetics, there are parts of Scripture more usefully interpreted ideologically than in any other manner, as, for instance, the history of the temptation of Jesus by Satan, and accounts of demonia-'cal possessions.' But, it may be asked, who is to decide as to the use or abuse of such a principle of interpretation-is there no rule by which we may know whether the application of it be legitimate or excessive; are there no limits within which it must be confined? None whatever; for 'liberty must be left to all as to the extent in which they apply the principle; for there is no authority, through the expressed determination of the Church, nor of ' any other kind, which can define the limits within 'which it may be reasonably exercised.' And to what extent Mr Wilson might be willing to carry its application, becomes only too apparent when he tells us that, besides being legitimate with reference to some traits of the person of Jesus, His temptation by Satan, and the story of demoniacal possession, it

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may be applied to the unity of the race as descended from a single pair, to the account of the deluge, and to the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Here, then, are two powerful solvents at once for the historical narratives and the doctrinal truths of Scripture; the subjective test, and the principle of ideological interpretation. When the one fails, the other is at hand to replace it. Of the two we confess that, much as we dislike rationalism and spiritualism, we would choose the subjective test as the least of two evils; for, in the use of this, we appeal at least to reason and conscience, whereas, on the principle of ideology, we have to do only with the wild imaginings of fancy. But with the two combined, or brought into alternate use, we cannot see how a single fragment of revelation can be preserved.

Such are some of the theological aspects of this paper; let us now turn to its ecclesiastical bearings. It attempts to determine the right constitution of the Church, and to discuss the question of subscription to creeds, and especially to the articles of the Church of England. In respect to both, we think he has fallen into serious and dangerous error.

His views of the right constitution of the Church are stated in connection with an account of the difference of opinion on this subject, which had arisen at Geneva between the Comte de Gasparin and M. Bungener. The former, we are told, 'laid it down in the strongest manner, that the individualist principle supplies the true basis of the Church, and

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that by inaugurating the union 1 ' and State Constantine introduced i the false and Pagan principle of The latter, again, maintained 'that t ' principle was not unlawful, nor ess ' that it was recognised and consecra 'ample of the Jewish theocracy: ' greatest victories of Christianity ha And what, pray, is the pri: vidualism, and the antagonist prin tudinism, as applied to Christian c cannot remember that we ever heard these names before. We have hear congregations of the faithful, and of na comprehending many distinct cong. individualism and multitudinism-are existences, or mere abstractions, entia definition is kindly supplied; and, as it, a Church founded on the individual is a Christian society which admits no bership but such as have been really which seeks to maintain a pure com cluding all who cannot give satisfacto their having undergone that great cha perhaps, the children of believing 1 they have reached adult age; when founded on the multitudinist principle all and sundry, of whatever age, or character, who belong to the nation established, so that, according to the 1

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Dr Arnold, every subject of the State is also ipso facto, or de jure, a member also of the Christian Church. And so far from its being true that individualism was sanctioned by Christ and His Apostles, while multitudinism was afterwards introduced by Constanting, to the manifest corruption of the Church. Mr Wilson holds, that the very reverse was the fact -that 'St Paul, and the Lord Jesus, offered the 'Gospel to the Jews, as a nation, on the multi-'tudinist principle; but when they put it from ' them, it must make progress by kindling a fire in the earth, even to the dividing families, two against 'three, and three against two.' 'Christianity was therefore compelled, as it were, against its will, ' and in contradiction to its proper design, to make the first steps in its progress by cutting across old ' societies, filtering into the world by individual con-' versions, showing, nevertheless, from the very first, 'its multitudinist tendencies, and before it could ' comprehend countries or citics, embracing families 'and households.' 'The Roman world was pene-' trated, in the first instance, by an individual and ' domestic Christianity, to which was owing the ' first conversion of our own country; in the second, or Saxon conversion, the people were Christian-'ized en masse.' 'The conversions operated by the ' German Apostle Boniface, were of the same multi-'tudinous kind as those of Austin, and Paulinus, ' in Britain.'

Mr Wilson prefers the multitudinous to the indi-

vidualist method of conversion; and were he speaking of those general awakenings or simultaneous revivals in which the Spirit of God has sometimes brought home the truth 'in demonstration and with power' to the hearts and consciences of thousands as on the day of Pentecost, we might be found to agree with him; but in these general awakenings every soul is dealt with individually, and made to feel that it must transact with God for its own salvation; whereas the multitudinous conversions of which Mr Wilson speaks, are nothing more than those changes wrought in the outward condition or the mere profession, of a whole people, when they submit to bow before a crucifix, or to be sprinkled with holy water, or to wear the Christian name. But, apart from this, are the two extremes of individualism and multitudinism, such as he has described them to be, the only possible forms of the Christian Church? May there not be an intermediate system, which, neither professing, on the one hand, to institute a perfectly 'pure communion,' composed of converted men, nor consenting, on the other, to receive all and sundry of whatever character, shall require on the part of its members a 'credible profession' of faith in Christ and obedience to Him, and seek to maintain the sanctity of religious ordinances by the salutary exercise of discipline on such as give scandal to their brethren? Is it not, on this intermediate principle, that most of the Churches of the Reformation have been constituted,

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and have not some of them continued to adhere to it even after they became national Churches, and were established by law?

But the exercise of discipline, without which there can be no effective government of the Church, is peculiarly distasteful to our essayist; he would fain exempt the private members of his communion from all subjection to it, just as he is anxious to liberate her ministers from the restraints of articles and creeds. With this view, he is desirous to show that in the primitive Church itself, neither error in doctrine nor immorality in life was visited with excision from the society, or exclusion from the privileges which were common to all. What mean, then, those solemn words-'If he hear not the 'Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and 'a publican:' 'A man that is an heretic after the ' first and second admonition reject, knowing that 'he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being 'condemned by himself:' 'Put away from your-' selves that wicked person?'

But there are other restraints besides the bands of discipline; there is the intolerable bondage of subjection, and especially of subscription, to articles of faith. He says truly enough, that the principle of 'doctrinal limitation' is at variance with that of a multitudinist church; and assuming that every national religious establishment must possess that character, he infers that there should be no 'doctrinal limitation' in the Church of England. But supposing

that this were granted, so far as regards the private members of that Church who have never been re quired to qualify for the Communion by subscribing any set of articles, would it follow that the Church should admit her ministers to public office as teacher and pastors without asking and obtaining some satis factory assurance of their being sound in faith We state the question thus generally, because we have never thought that mere subscription was the only, or the most effective, guarantee of sound teaching in the Church; and we suspect that it is no the act of subscription only, but the requisition o any guarantee, or the acknowledgment of any governing power in the Church, having authority to exercise discipline and to call erroneous teacher to account, which is the real cause of all the opposition which has been made to creeds and article of faith. Mr Wilson seems to think that the ministers of the Church of England should be left free to teach what they please, and that they should not be amenable to discipline, however much their teaching may be at variance with the Thirty-nine Articles. He holds that creeds are opposed to the catholicity of the Church, instead of being, as they really are, a manifestation of the essential unity and agreement of all Protestant Churches, and a bond of union, as well as a basis of communion between all who hold substantially 'the faith which ' was once delivered to the saints.' He speaks as if a Church, with a fixed creed, were an anomaly in

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the midst of a fluid state of opinion in society—as if the truth of God must be as mobile and variable as the opinions of men. The Church, he says, 'should 'give no occasion for a reaction against itself, nor ' provoke the individualist element into separatism. 'It would do this if it submitted to define itself 'otherwise than by its own nationality.' 'It would ' do this also if, while the civil side of the nation is ' fluid, the ecclesiastical side of it is fixed; if thought ' and speech are free among all other classes, and ' not free among those who hold the office of leaders ' and teachers of the rest in the highest things.' And he concludes, 'If the National Church is to be . true to the multitudinist principle, and to corre-'spond ultimately to the national character, the ' freedom of opinion which belongs to the English ' citizen should be conceded to the English Church-' man, and the freedom which is already practically 'enjoyed by the members of the congregation can-'not without injustice be denied to its ministers.' Surely Mr Wilson must see, on a moment's reflection, that, in so far as there is any analogy between the two cases, it tells against his whole argument. Is there in civil society any class of public officebearers who are subject to no conditions, and amenable to no superintendence or control? The judges of the land are as independent as he would wish the ministers of the Church to be, but are they not sworn to interpret and apply the law impartially, whatever may be their private opinion as to the justice or

expediency of any particular enactment? And if they cannot in conscience do so, are they not bound to vacate their seat, and give place to others who can honestly undertake to administer the law as it stands? The English citizen is free; but is he subject to no law, or amenable to no authority, in the exercise of his rights as a freeman? And why should a clergyman be the only are in society, the only one invested with a sacred trust, but exempt from all law and control?

The truth is, Mr Wilson occupies a false position in reference to this whole matter, and cannot argue the question effectively on either side. He sustains two distinct characters not very compatible with each other: he is a minister in one of the 'articled Churches,' and also a member of the 'movement party,' which declaims against all articles. Hence he is compelled, if he would vindicate his consistency in remaining a minister of the Church, to show, on the one hand, that, after all, the articles are not so very stringent as to impose any obligation on his conscience to retire; and yet, if he would get rid of the articles, he must show, on the other, that subscription to them is an intolerable bondage. And it might be amusing, were it not very sad, to mark the miserable shifts and expedients to which he is compelled to have recourse for this twofold object: now quibbling about the precise meaning of a word, to evade the obligation which is imposed by subscription; and again denouncing every attempt to restrain liberty of

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opinion and speech in the case of men who have vowed to be in subjection to the authorities of the Church!

And what is the remedy which he proposes for existing evils? The abolition of the Thirty-nine Articles? By no means. Let them remain as a venerable monument of what was once the faith of the Church, so that coming generations may regard them as Athanase Coquerel regards the Confessions of the Reformed Church of France, when the forty articles of her old Synods were declared to be no longer a term of ministerial communion, but were still preserved 'simply as venerable records of the science ' and piety of their fathers.' What change, then, is demanded? Simply the abolition of subscription to the articles, and whatever follows as a necessary consequence from that. 'An enactment prohibiting the bishops from requiring the subscriptions under ' the third article of the thirty-sixth canon, together ' with the repeal of 13th Elizabeth, except as to its 'second section, would relieve many scruples, and ' make the Church more national, without disturbing 'its ultimate law.' Such is the proposed remedy. We trust that the Church and the Legislature will pause and reflect before they comply with this suggestion, proceeding as it does from a party who are scarcely entitled to be heard in such a case. Recent experience has abundantly proved that mere subscription is far from being of itself an effective safeguard against the entrance of unsound teachers into the Church; but, although it may not be sufficient without some other guarantees, let it not be set aside until a better provision can be substituted in its place. We cannot discuss the wide question of 'articles' on its general merits; but those who may wish to study it we refer to the standard treatise on the subject,—'The Uses of Creeds and Confessions of Faith,' by Professor Dunlop,—which has been recently republished,\* and which contains a full and masterly vindication of them in reply to all the objections which have recently been urged against them.

\* London: Hamilton, Adams and Co. Edinburgh': Johnstone, Hunter, and Co.

#### No. V.

#### 'THE MOSAIC COSMOGONY.'\*

THE author of this essay appends to his name the modest title of Master of Arts; but there is no indication of his being in holy orders, or of his holding office in the Church. If we are correct in supposing that he is the only layman among the contributors to the volume of 'Essays and Reviews,' it is no more than common justice to him to say, that he is much more moderate in his sentiments, and less offensive in his statements on the subject of Divine truth, than most of his clerical associates.

He is far from being free, however, from serious error, when he speaks of the nature of Divine revelation, and the authority of the record in which it is contained. He admits, or rather contends, that there may be a mixture of truth and error in the Sacred Scriptures, but only, it should seem, of error in regard to natural things, not in regard to any of the peculiar doctrines of religion. There is nothing in his essay that would justify us in imputing to him the extreme opinions on these subjects which have been openly avowed by some of his fellow-labourers; and we can only express our regret that one who seems honest, and comparatively harmless, should

<sup>\*</sup> By C. W. Goodwin, M.A.

have allowed himself to be associated in the same enterprise with such reckless speculators.

Still, he has laid himself open to the charge of sanctioning some grave and dangerous errors, both in regard to the real nature and right idea of Divine revelation, and also in regard to the interpretation of the Mosaic narrative. A few remarks on each of these topics will prepare the way for what is intended to be the principal object of the present paper—an explanation, viz., and a defence of the position actually held at the present day by many educated and thoughtful men who are not prepared to commit themselves to any particular theory in regard to the conciliation of the Mosaic account with the discoveries of geology, but who still continue to adhere to the historical, and reject the mythical interpretation of the sacred narrative.

The fundamental error of Mr Goodwin's essay lies in the conception which he has formed to himself of a Divine revelation, or rather, of the character of the record in which that revelation is contained. He seems to suppose that it may, and that, in point of fact, it does contain a mixture of truth and error 'It would have been well,' he says, 'if theologians' had made up their minds to accept frankly the 'principle, that those things, for the discovery of which man has faculties specially provided, are no 'fit subjects of a Divine revelation. Had this been unhesitatingly done, either the definition and idea of Divine revelation must have been modified, and

' the possibility of an admixture of error have been ' allowed, or such parts of the Hebrew writings as ' were found to be repugnant to fact must have been ' pronounced to form no part of revelation.' Here a general principle is first laid down, and then two alternatives are presented to us. But surely the principle is expressed in terms far too general and sweeping; for man has 'faculties specially provided' for the discovery of God, of law, of sin, of good and ill desert, of the facts which fall within the range of his present experience and observation, and of the facts which belong to the domain of history; must we, then, hold that none of these are 'fit subjects for 'Divine revelation,' or that no reference can be made to whatever belongs to human experience or history in the record which contains that revelation? On the contrary, is not the whole structure of revelation presented in the form of a historical narrative? And is it not one secret of its marvellous interest and power, that it appeals on so many points to facts which man is able to estimate and to verify? These facts are referred to in Scripture in three ways;sometimes in the way of mere allusion, as when mention is made of the rising and setting of the sun; sometimes in the way of assertion, as when the fact of human depravity is affirmed; sometimes in the way of narration, as when the history of Israel is recorded, or the account of creation revealed. Whatever faculties man might possess, and however he might be qualified to exercise them on any of these

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facts, his mere capacity to know something about them in a natural way cannot be held to supersede the necessity of Divine instruction in regard to them, since they are undeniably included in the contents of Scripture; and, least of all, can it be held to supersede a revelation in regard to the first origin of the world, since confessedly neither reason nor science could rise to the sublime idea of creation. But this view, it may be said, of the relation subsisting between Scripture and facts lays revelation open to be tested at every point by man's experience; and what if they are found not to agree? Let them be honestly and impartially compared, and we have no fear as to the result. Let the book of revelation and the book of experience be fairly compared, and no such discrepancy will ever be discovered between the two as can impose on us the necessity of adopting either of the alternatives which Mr Goodwin offers to us. We shall not find it necessary either to modify our idea of revelation, on the one hand, so as to make it include a mixture of truth and error, or to reject, on the other, any of the Hebrew writings as forming no part of the sacred canon. There may occasionally be an apparent discrepancy; and for a time it may be difficult, in the present imperfect state of our knowledge, to find a satisfactory explanation of it. But a real discrepancy there cannot be between nature and Scripture, if God be the author of both; and we must revise our interpretation of each by patient and persevering

study, till the difficulty is removed by the further progress of science or of criticism.

But assuming that there is not only an apparent but a real discrepancy between the Mosaic narrative of creation and the results of geological research, Mr Goodwin proceeds to reason upon it in the following terms:- 'An inspired writer may be per-' mitted to allude to the phenomena of nature ac-' cording to the vulgar view of such things, without 'impeachment of his better knowledge; but if he ' speaks of the same phenomena assertively, we are 'bound to suppose that things are as he represents 'them, however much our knowledge of nature ' may be disposed to recalcitrate. But if we find a ' difficulty in admitting that such misrepresentations ' can find a place in revelation, the difficulty lies in 'our having previously assumed what a Divine ' revelation ought to be. If God made use of im-' perfectly informed men to lay the foundations of ' that higher knowledge for which the human race ' was destined, is it wonderful that they should have ' committed themselves to assertions not in accord-' ance with facts, although they may have believed ' them to be true? On what grounds has the popu-' lar notion of Divine revelation been built up? Is 'it not plain that the plan of Providence for the 'education of man is a progressive one; and as im-' perfect men have been used as the agents for teach-'ing mankind, is it not to be expected that their ' teachings should be partial and, to some extent,

We admit at once that the narrative in Genesis must be received in the same character in which it is offered, as being historically true; and that no attempt should be made to explain it away on the plea that revelation was not designed to teach men science, or on any other pretext whatever. Thus far we agree with Mr Goodwin. But his whole reasoning proceeds on the assumption that the sacred narrative contains something which can be proved to be at direct variance with the ascertained results of science, for he had already told us that 'it can ' scarcely be said that this chapter is not intended ' in part to teach and convey at least some physical ' truth; and taking its words in their plain sense, it ' manifestly gives a view of the universe adverse to ' that of modern science.' It will soon appear that this assumption is utterly groundless, and that whatever plausibility may seem to belong to it arises, not from the words of the sacred narrative, but from the strange interpretation which Mr Goodwin himself has put upon them. We have no difficulty in returning an explicit answer to Mr. Goodwin's question, 'On what grounds has the popular notion of Divine ' revelation been built up?' It rests ultimately on the ground that God is Himself the author of revelation, and that, however imperfect might be the mere human agents whom He was pleased to employ, they were so directed and controlled by Him who can neither err nor deceive, that they spake only 'as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.' It rests, also, on

the express recognition of the Old Testament Scriptures by the Apostles as 'the lively oracles'--'the ' oracles of God:'-and of 'the Law, the Psalms, and 'the Prophets;' as 'the Scripture which cannot be 'broken; as 'the Law, one jot or tittle of which 'cannot fail,' on the part of Him 'who spake as 'never man spake.' There is a painful absence of any express acknowledgment, in Mr Goodwin's essay, of God as the real author of His own Word: but if he could realise this one conviction, he would be at no loss to understand on what grounds the . popular notion of Divine revelation has been built up, or to account for the strong aversion with which every believer must regard a theory which teaches that the Word of God may contain 'an admixture ' of truth and error.' Ordinary Christians will have far less difficulty in reconciling the narrative of creation with all that they know of the past history of nature, than in accepting a theory which represents the sacred writers as infallible teachers of spiritual truth, but fallible teachers in regard to all the facts belonging to the domain of experience and history; and which would either require, for its safe application, a 'verifying faculty,' such as should enable them to separate the ore from the dross, and to winnow the wheat from the chaff: or virtually make science the arbiter to decide what part of their Bibles they were to receive or reject.

If we now proceed to examine Mr Goodwin's interpretation of the Mosaic narrative, we shall find . w.h. . . . . . . . . . .

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that his objections to its historical truth variance with the results of geological r entirely on what he has added to it in comments, for which he alone, and not is responsible. At the risk of being decritical, we must seriously object to the essay-' The Mosaic Cosmogony.' In 1 sense of that term, as denoting a th original formation of the material unigives no cosmogony: that was left in a to the speculative Greeks, and, in our the no less speculative minds of astro Moses contents himself with geologists. but sublime announcement—' In the bea ' created the heavens and the earth.' I a historical narrative of a subsequent c it is limited to the reconstruction of the c existing, and the introduction of the preof being. And what does he say? We Mr Goodwin in thinking that 'it is no 'commentator's or interpreter's busines duce obscurity, or find difficulties, 'exist; the difficulties arise, for the first we seek to import a meaning into th which it certainly never could have those to whom it was originally addr us see how closely he has adhered to his canon of interpretation. Moses thus wi ' God said, let there be a firmament (raki ' in the midst of the waters, and let it

' waters from the waters; and God made the firma-' ment, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above ' the firmament.' What the nature of the firmament was, Moses does not say, thinking, probably, that every child who looked up to the clouds, and knew them to be so many fleecy reservoirs of moisture for irrigating and watering the earth, would easily understand his meaning. But what says Mr Goodwin? 'It represents the sky as a watery vault, 'in which the sun, moon, and stars are set;' nay, the work of the second day of creation is to 'erect the vault of heaven, which is represented 'as supporting an ocean of water above it. The 'waters are said to be divided, so that some are ' below, some above, the vault. That the Hebrews ' understood the sky, firmament, or heaven, to be a ' permanent solid vault—as it appears to the ordinary ' observer-is evident enough from various expres-' sions made use of concerning it. It is said to have ""pillars," "foundations," "doors," and "windows." 'No quibbling about the derivation of the word 'rakia, which is literally "something beaten out," ' can affect the explicit description of the Mosaic ' writer, contained in the words-" the waters that "are above the firmament," or avail to show that he ' was aware that the sky is but transparent space.' With a mind clinging so closely to literalism and matter of fact, Mr Goodwin would be an indifferent adept in the art of 'ideological interpretation,' and

we might almost despair of making any impression on him by speaking of the difference between plain and figurative language, were it not that, in a moment of unusual inspiration, he has himself made use of expressions closely resembling those of Moses. he speaks on this wise: - 'The earth, apparently so still and stedfast, lying in majestic repose beneath the ethereal vault, is a globular body.' 'The sun, which seems to leap up each morning from the east, and traversing the skyey bridge, slides down 'into the west.' 'As for the glittering dust which emblazons the nocturnal sky, there is reason to believe that each spark is a self-luminous body.' Very good: but does Mr Goodwin wish to be understood, as he understands the words of Moses, that there is a real material bridge which is traversed by the sun, or real material dust scattered over the sky? -and if not, why should he deny to Moses the same liberal interpretation which he would claim for himself? It is true that we read of the 'pillars,' 'foundations,' doors,' and 'windows' of the firmament; but we read also of 'the wings of the wind,' and of the 'mountains skipping,' without ever dreaming of thinking it necessary to ascribe real wings to the one, or a saltatory motion to the other.

Another, and a more offensive, instance of the same kind occurs where, referring to the sublime language of Moses, 'God created man in His own 'image,' he says that, 'the phrase has been ex-'plained away to mean merely "perfect" or "sinless;" ' although the Pentateuch abounds in passages show-'ing that the Hebrews contemplated the Divine 'Being in the visible form of a man:' and again. ' man's closer relationship to his Maker is indicated by the representation that he was formed last of 'all creatures, and in the visible likeness of God.' No reference is made to the apostolic comments on the words of Moses, from which we learn that the image of God in which we were originally created, and after which we must be renewed through Christ, consisted in 'knowledge, righteousness, and true 'holiness;' and the anthropomorphic expressions which occur elsewhere in Scripture are pressed into the service, as if he thought, with Archbishop King and his followers, that there is no radical difference between metaphors and analogies,-forgetting that while metaphors may contain and convey a true analogy, they are not founded on the mere relation of resemblance, but involve also a metonymy suggested by other relations of a totally different kind.

Mr Goodwin expresses his doubt whether the word rendered 'created' (bara) signifies the bringing into being that which had no existence before, or merely the forming and fashioning of pre-existing materials. Professor Baden Powell had also attempted to make something of this, but in a much more dogmatic spirit. It is sufficient to say that divines acknowledge both a mediate and an immediate work of creation; but that when reference is made to what was done 'in the beginning,' it must

mean the production by the Divine will of what had no existence before; and as regards the import of the Hebrew verb, the reader may consult the best Jewish authorities, especially Menasseh Ben-Israel in his 'Problemata Triginta de Creatione.'

Perhaps the most striking instance of Mr Goodwin's tendency to superinduce his own meaning on the words of Moses occurs in his treatment of that portion of the narrative which relates to the 'hea-'vens,' the 'sun, moon, and stars.' It is almost incredible that an intelligent, well-educated man should have fallen into such an egregious blunder, and still more that he should have ascribed it to Moses. He says-'The phrase, "the heaven and "the earth" (v. 1), is evidently used to signify the 'universe of things, inasmuch as the heaven in its oroper signification has no existence until the 'second day.' 'The heaven itself is distinctly said to have been formed by the division of the waters on the second day. Consequently, during the indefi-' nite ages which elapsed from the primal creation of matter until the first Mosaic day of creation, there was no sky, no local habitation for the sun, moon, and stars, even supposing those bodies to ' have been included in the original material.' An assumption more utterly groundless it is impossible to conceive. Why, he had himself acknowledged that 'in the beginning,'-long anterior to the first Mosaic day of creation,—' God created the heaven and 'the earth;' yet he would now exclude 'the sun,

' moon, and stars' from that primeval creation, as if Moses, or any man, inspired or uninspired, if he were only gifted with common sense, could be supposed to contradict himself thus flatly within the compass of a few short verses. Mr Goodwin avails himself, with more tact than we like to give him credit for, of the somewhat ambiguous rendering of the 14th verse-'God said let there be lights in the firmament of the ' heavens to divide the day from the night, and let . them be for signs and for seasons, and for days and ' years;' but every scholar knows that Rosenmüller and other critics agree with Dr Buckland in holding that the 'sun, moon, and stars,' are not said to have been called into existence on the fourth day, but only 'prepared and appointed to certain offices' or uses. This is the clear meaning of the original; and it is abundantly sufficient to neutralise any objection founded on the erroneous supposition that Moses contradicts himself by affirming, that the heavens were created 'in the beginning,' and yet that the 'sun, moon, and stars' had no existence till the fourth day of a subsequent work of creation.

Omitting, then, the additions which Mr Goodwin has foisted into the Mosaic narrative, let us calmly review it, and see if it can justly be said to contain anything that can be proved to be at variance with the Mosaic narrative. 'In the beginning,' says Moses, with divine simplicity, 'God created the heaven and 'the earth.' 'The first clear view which we obtain,' says Mr Goodwin, 'of the early condition of the earth

presents to us a ball of matter, fluid with intense heat, spinning on its own axis, and revolving 'round the sun.' We have already passed, under Mr Goodwin's guidance, from the region of fact to the region of theory—from the sublime announcement of Genesis to the vain speculations of men seeking 'to be wise above what is written.' Does science certify this, 'first clear view of the early ' condition of the earth?' And if so, what science? Is it geology, or is it astronomy, or both? Does not Mr Goodwin himself admit that the nebular theory is a mere 'hypothesis,' and that 'geology carries back the ' history of the earth's crust to a very remote period. until it arrives at a region of uncertainty, where philosophy is reduced to mere guesses and possibilities, and pronounces nothing definite;'-nay, that to this region belong the speculations which have been ventured upon as to the original concretion of the earth and planets out of nebular matter, of which the sun may have been the nucleus?' And as to its 'spinning round its axis,' does he not know that Mr Ritchie has written an elaborate book ('The Dynamical Theory of the Earth') to prove 'that the ' earth did not always rotate around its axis?' But, whatever may be thought of this, Moses says nothing either of the nebular theory or of any other; he simply sets forth the grand lesson-'In the begin-' ning, God created the heaven and the earth.'

Assuming, then, that 'the heaven' as well as 'the 'earth' was created 'in the beginning,' what are we

to understand by that expression? Evidently 'the beginning of the ways of God,' the commencement of His creative work. Nothing is said of its date, as nothing indeed could be said of it, for time began with creation, and is applicable only to beings with whom succession is possible. Nor is it said how long the heaven and the earth continued in the state in which they were thus created 'in the beginning;' they may have continued, for aught that Moses says to the contrary, for millions of ages, and they may have passed through a thousand periods of change, by slow decay or sudden catastrophes, such as would leave ample room for all the results of geological research, were they a thousand times more abundant than they are. At length a time arrived when, through some great but unexplained convulsion, 'the earth was without form and void,' or, as Mr Goodwin expresses it, 'the earth was waste and desolate,' and 'darkness was upon the face of the deep.' It is not said that the heaven and the earth were enveloped in darkness from the 'beginning;' so that, for aught we know, animals having eyes adapted to light, and depending for their food on the vegetable products of the earth, may have existed before; it is said only that for a season immediately preceding the Hexaëmeron of the new terrestrial creation, the earth was 'waste and desolate.' But then 'the spirit of God'-not the wind, as Mr Goodwin insinuates, but that Divine agent who alone could bring order out of confusion, and evolve a

cosmos from the bosom of chaos—'moved or brooded 'upon the face of the deep.' And 'God said, let the 'waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and LET THE DRY LAND APPEAR;'—it existed before, but had been submerged; it must now appear once more above the waters—'and God 'called the dry land earth, and the gathering to-'gether of the waters called He seas.' And so in six successive days or periods the glorious work was progressively accomplished, till 'God saw every 'thing that He had made, and behold it was very 'good.'

Taking this simple view of the meaning of the Mosaic narrative, a view originally suggested by Dr Chalmers, subsequently adopted by Professor Buckland, and more recently revived by Dr Pratt, we feel no need for any other method of conciliation. It depends entirely on the interval elapsing between the 'beginning' and the state of the earth when it is declared to be 'waste and desolate.' That interval may have been wide enough to admit of all the changes in the strata of the earth, and the successive tribes of its inhabitants, which geology has yet ascertained. We are aware, however, that some, seduced, as we think, by the fascinations of speculative theory, have abandoned this explanation, and attempted another mode of conciliation; among the rest the late Mr Hugh Miller, for whose memory we must ever cherish the most affectionate admiration. as well as Dr Kurtze in Germany, and the celebrated

Marcel de Serres in France. Mr Miller seems to have been influenced mainly by two considerations: the first was, that he found the fossil remains of some animals of the same type with the present denizens of the earth in the older formations; and the second—perhaps to his imaginative mind the strongest—was, the persuasion that the three great periods of geological history might be shown to correspond in the order of their succession with the progress of the creative work in Genesis, and so to afford, not a means of conciliation merely, but a : confirmation of the Mosaic account. It was necessary, however, to make the 'days' represent long periods of time. Should there be some who prefer this method to the simpler view of Chalmers and Buckland, we will say nothing to shake their confidence in it, although we feel it to be unnecessary for our own satisfaction. We admit that the term 'day' is used with a certain latitude of meaning, since it is applied at one time to denote the duration of light merely, as when 'God called the light day,'-at another to denote the whole period both of light and darkness between one day and another-as when it is said 'The evening and the morning were the first ' day;'-and at another, perhaps, to denote the whole of the six days, as when it is said, 'In the day that . 'God created the heaven and the earth.' But the

<sup>• &#</sup>x27;De la Cosmogonie de Moise, Comparée aux Faits Geologiques,' par Marcel de Serres, Professeur de Mineralogie et de Geologie. Paris, 1841.

existence of a few organisms in the earlier formations, analogous, or even identical, with existing types, would not of itself induce us to abandon the older explanation, since it is quite conceivable that in replenishing the earth God might reproduce some animals similar to those which had existed before; and although there may be a superficial resemblance between the periods of geological history and the succession of God's work on the three great days, there is not such an exact correspondence as would be required to furnish any positive evidence in confirmation of the Mosaic narrative.

We cannot close without adverting briefly to the real state of the question, and the general conditions of the argument; and we do so with a view especially to the satisfaction of those-and they are not a few-who have been perplexed by the pretensions of geology. The question has often been discussed as if our belief in the authority of Moses and the Pentateuch was involved in its solution. The authority of Moses rests on the miraculous facts of his own age by which his divine commission was established, and on the unanimous testimony of a whole nation to these facts-a nation who received at his hands a code of laws and a system of theocratic government. It is on the ground of his divine commission that we accept his narrative of the creation, and we receive it, as he did, simply as a revelation from God. Moses is the writer, but God Himself is the revealer. Accordingly he gives forth his nar-

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rative, not as if he had been an eve-witness of the events which he relates, or as if he had received information respecting them merely from authentic tradition: he makes known what he had been divinely taught. At the utmost, therefore, any supposed discrepancy between his narrative and the results of geological research can only amount to a difficulty in regard to an authority otherwise established; but every difficulty will not warrant the rejection of his claims, and one like this should be left to wait for its solution in the further progress of the interpretation both of Nature and Scripture. In every walk of inquiry we are compelled to leave behind us some outstanding difficulties of this kind; and it is enough, in all such cases, to show that there may be one or more hypothetical solutions of them, although we may be at a loss to determine which of several possible explanations ought to be preferred.\* But never let us entertain the thought that there is 'a mixture ' of truth and error' in 'the Word of God.'

\* Note E.

#### No. VI.

## \*TENDENCIES OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT IN ENGLAND, 1688-1750.\*

EVERY author is free to mark out and define his own subject, and to select even some one particular tonic comprehended under it for special or separate consideration; but in writing the history of society, and still more the history of religious thought, it is extremely difficult to find a fixed line of demarcation between preceding and subsequent times, such as shall serve to mark off two distinct provinces having no connection with each other. For, as Mr Pattison reminds us, 'the Church and the world of ' to-day are what they are as the result of the whole ' of their antecedents.' The likeliest method of surmounting the difficulty might be to select, as our point of departure, some remarkable event which put an end to an old and brought in a new order of things, such as the glorious Revolution in 1688, with reference to civil and political affairs; or the still more glorious Reformation, with reference to the historical progress of true religion. But even in selecting such great eras as affording prominent and well-defined landmarks in tracing the course of human progress, it must never be forgotten that the \* By Mark Pattison, B.D.

new order of things then introduced, dissimilar and even opposite as it may be to that which preceded it, had still its roots in the past, and was connected at all points by indissoluble ties with the experience and history of living beings like ourselves, who thought and felt and acted in their own day, and left the impress of their minds on the social institutions and religious forms, which more recent times have partly rejected and partly retained. For this reason, we think that, had it been Mr Pattison's object to illustrate the civil and social progress of England, he could not have chosen a better commencement than the Revolution of 1688; but that in writing a paper which aspires to be 'A History of the Theory of Belief in the Church of England,' he should have commenced with the Reformation, and traced the progress of apologetic literature from its first rise in the Martyr Church—the Church of Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, and Jewell-downwards through its sad and sudden occultation in the age of Laud, and its partial revival through the learning and piety of the Puritans, till he reached his present starting point, and proceeded thence to survey its subsequent development in the times which he passes under review. Had he followed this course, he would have been brought into contact at the outset, with the richest and most evangelical theology which the Church of England has ever enjoyedthe theology of a suffering Church crowned with martyrdom, which lived as it believed, and exhibited

a freshness and fulness of spiritual life such as has embalmed its memory for ever in the hearts of all devout Englishmen; and he would have been the better able to mark, and to place before his readers in strong relief, those striking contrasts which it presents to the Formalism of the Laudean era, as well as to the Rationalism of more recent times.

But accepting his essay in the shape in which he has presented it to the public, we propose to examine its contents with a view to ascertain its general drift and object, and how it contributes to the development of that scheme of thought which his associates have endeavoured to introduce into the Church of England. Omitting, to a large extent, the mere details of history, and directing our attention chiefly to the theological bearings of his essay, we will select a few of the more prominent topics which are presented to our notice in the course of it, and will consider chiefly these four:-his definition of Theology;-his description of Rationalism;—his account of the progress and results of the great Controversy between the Christian Apologists and the Deists of the eighteenth century; -and his views of the actual State of matters in the Church of England at the present time.

The paper is written in an interesting style; and as it is to a large extent historical, while it is interspersed here and there with pleasing gossip, literary and ecclesiastical, the reader allows himself to be carried along as on the surface of a smooth stream, without putting himself to the trouble of sounding its depths, or seeking to ascertain what these depths enclose. But on looking beneath the surface, and considering more closely the direction of the current, one is startled to find that it is gliding thus smoothly over quicksands, and tending towards a fearful precipice.

Let us listen, first of all, to Mr Pattison's definition of theology. 'Theology is—first, and primarily, the ' contemplative, speculative habit, by means of which the mind places itself already in another world. 'than this: a habit begun here, to be raised to per-' fect vision hereafter. Secondly, and in an inferior ' degree, it is ethical and regulative of our conduct ' as men in those relations which are temporal and 'transitory.' What have we here? What but a vague sort of mysticism in the first clause, and a gross form of mere secularism in the second? Theology is a mental habit—not an objective truth revealed, but a subjective speculative tendency—a power belonging to the mind, and spontaneously developed, by which it 'places itself' already in another world than this; and all, so far as appears, without any aid from Divine teaching, but solely from its own internal energy and the vivid force of its own intuitions. Had Mr Pattison been speaking of faith and not of theology, he might have told us, in the Apostle's words, that 'it is the substance of 'things hoped for and the evidence of things not ' seen;' and that this faith will ultimately 'be raised to

' perfect vision;' but Christian faith involves knowledge, and knowledge presupposes Divine teaching, when it relates to the things of God; and as Divine teaching implies a fixed and infallible standard of truth, to which all human theology must conform, it is more convenient to represent theology, not as a doctrinal system, but as a 'contemplative, speculative 'habit!' And what is its use? Is it to ascertain 'the 'will of God for our salvation!'-to supply an answer to the question, 'How shall a man be just 'with God?' or 'What must I do to be saved?' or, 'What good thing shall I do that I may inherit 'eternal life?' 'It is ethical and regulative of our conduct as men, in those relations which are tem-'poral and transitory.' What! are there no higher relations than such as subsist between man and man, or between the individual and society, during the present life? Are there not the eternal, indestructible relations between men and God, which are disclosed in some measure by the light of nature itself? and the still higher and more endearing relations which are revealed in the clearer light of Scripture, by which He is made known as God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the just God and the Saviour, the Redeemer of the guilty, the Renewer of the depraved? Does theology say nothing of such momentous relations as these? Does he hold, as he tells us Tindal, the great champion of Deism, held, that 'the natural law of right and duty is so absolutely perfect that God could not add anything

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'to it:' and that 'it is commensurate with all the ' real relations in which man stands?' Or does he acknowledge, with Butler, that 'the essence of re-' vealed religion, as distinguished from natural, consists in religious regards to the Son and to the 'Holy Ghost; and the obligation we are under of ' paying these religious regards to each of these Di-' vine persons respectively, arises from the respective ' relations which they each stand in to us. How these relations are made known, whether by reason · or revelation, makes no alteration in the case; because the duties arise out of the relations them-'selves, not out of the manner in which we are 'informed of them. The Son and the Spirit have each His proper office in that great dispensation of 'Providence, the redemption of the world; the one ' as our Mediator, the other as our Sanctifier. Does 'not, then, the duty of religious regards to both 'these Divine persons as necessarily arise to the ' view of reason out of the very nature of these offices ' and relations, as the inward goodwill and kind in-' tention which we owe to our fellow-creatures arise ' out of the common relations between us and them.' (Anal., P. IL, c. 1.)

We hold Mr Pattison's definition of theology to be defective and erroneous; both because he makes it to consist in a mere mental habit, without reference to any system of revealed truth, and because he represents it as a regulative principle, applicable only to earthly relations, which are temporal and

transitory. And yet he is so possessed with the idea that theology is a speculative habit, and nothing more, that he thinks the one designation may be harmlessly substituted for the other. Speaking of the eighteenth century, Professor Fraser had character-' ized the half century which followed the publication of Locke's Essay' as 'the golden age of its purely ' speculative literature.' In quoting the sentence, Mr Pattison says, 'Professor Fraser does not hesitate to call this "the golden age of English theo-"logy;"' he substitutes theology for speculative thought; and we can devise no better apology for the apparent misrepresentation than that which is suggested by his favourite definition of theology as 'the ' contemplative, speculative habit.' And that he is not willing to recognise any other relations besides those which subsist between man and man, and which are 'temporal and transitory,' as falling under 'the ethical or regulative' rule of theology, seems to be indicated by his astounding language in regard to the most fundamental of all our natural relations to Rationalism 'is obliged to resolve religion into the moral government of God by rewards and ' punishments, and especially the latter.' 'It is this anthropomorphic conception of God, as the Goveron of the Universe, which is presented to us in the theology of the Hanoverian divines-a theology which excludes on principle not only all that is poetical in life, but all that is sublime in religious speculation.' 'It is this character which makes

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'the reading even of the "Analogy" so depressing to the soul: as Tholuck says of it, "We weary of "a long journey on foot, especially through deep "sand;" human nature is not only humbled, but crushed.'

What, then, is his account of Rationalism? Practically it is, in his estimation, any use of reason in regard to matters of religion, and especially in the treatment of its evidences. In this sense the word is used passim throughout his whole essay. But when he attempts, if not to define, at least to describe, it, he tells us that 'the Rationalism which is 'the common character of all the writers of this ' time (the sæculum rationalisticum from the appear-'ance of Locke's "Reasonableness of Christianity" ' till the publication of the "Tracts for the Times"), ' is a method rather than a doctrine, an unconscious 'assumption rather than a principle, from which 'they reason.' He had already spoken of the 'su-' premacy of reason '-- 'The growth and gradual ' diffusion through all religious thinking of the supremacy of reason. That which is rather a prin-' ciple or a mode of thinking than a doctrine, may be ' properly enough called Rationalism. The term is ' used in this country with so much laxity, that it is ' impossible to define the sense in which it is gener-'ally intended. But it is often taken to mean a 'system opposed to revealed religion, imported into ' this country from Germany at the beginning of the ' present century. A person, however, who surveys the

' course of English theology during the eighteenth century will have no difficulty in recognising that throughout all discussions, underneath all controversies, and common to all parties, lies the assumption of the supremacy of reason in matters of 'religion.' This is held to be the one common characteristic of all the writers on the evidences. who are subdivided however into two Schools, the one insisting mainly on the internal, the other on the external evidences, while both were subject to the charge of Rationalism. Mr Pattison must have learned this important lesson from the 'Tracts for ' the Times;' it seems to be the vinculum which connects the two rival Schools at Oxford, which are proceeding apparently in opposite directions, but which may be found after all to be offshoots from the same root, and to have a more radical connection with each other than may at first sight appear.

But, however this may be, the doctrine which teaches the supremacy of reason in matters of religion is Rationalism; but the doctrine which teaches the legitimate exercise of reason in examining the evidences and interpreting the meaning of Scripture, is not Rationalism, in the objectionable sense of that expression. The more enlightened divines even of the Romish Church are careful to distinguish between them, as Afré, the Archbishop of Paris, who fell at the barricades, did, in his introduction to Maret's 'Théodicée Chrétienne,' when he said, 'Le 'rationalisme et la raison sont deux choses fort

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'différentes.' To talk of the supremacy of reason in any sense is sheer absurdity. The eternal reason is supreme; man's reason is, and must be, subordinate. In every department it is a mere scholar, an interpreter, and nothing more. It is subject to an authority which is external to itself. It is dependent even on the bodily senses for all its information from without. In the memorable words of Bacon, it is only 'the minister and interpreter of nature.' Butler, indeed, speaks of the supremacy of conscience; but in what sense? Simply as having authority to govern all the inferior faculties of our own nature, not as being independent of Him whose vicegerent it is, or as being free from subjection to Him who is 'Lord of the conscience.' If supremacy can be ascribed to any of our faculties, it can only be in a relative sense, and with reference to other parts of our own nature, while our whole mind, conscience, and heart, must be subject to Him who alone is supreme.

Admitting the legitimate use of reason in matters of religion, and especially in examining the evidences and interpreting the meaning of Scripture, we can have no difficulty in stating, in explicit terms, wherein Rationalism, when it is held to be wrong, properly consists. There are various shades of it, and it may assume many different forms; but it radically consists in the assumption, that reason is not subordinate but supreme—not a scholar and interpreter merely, but an arbiter and judge—not sub-

ject to any external authority, but a law to itself in such sense that no other law can be imposed upon Yet it is subject to the natural laws of thought. and these laws are the ordinances of God: it is subject to the manifold influences of the outer world and of social life, and these arrangements are the appointments of God-why may it not be subject also to a revelation of His mind and will, should God condescend to become its instructor in a more extraordinary way? We say, then, that Rationalism, in the bad sense of the term, may be developed in different forms and manifested in different ways. It may assume the form of Deism, which affirms the sufficiency of reason, and rejects revelation as superfluous; or the form of what, by a strange perversion of language, is called rational Christianity, which admits the claims of revelation, but asserts either the right of reason to sit in judgment on its contents, and to reject whatever does not accord with its own preconceived opinions, thereby disowning the authority of a revelation which it acknowledges to be Divine; or, in direct opposition to its teaching, the sufficiency of reason to understand the mind and will of God, as revealed in Scripture, without that subjective illumination of the mind without which the 'natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; ' neither can he know them, because they are spiri-' tually discerned.'

Rationalism is defined by Bretschneider, as 'that

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' theological belief which does not admit any super-

' natural, immediate, and miraculous revelation from

' God to man, but asserts that there is only one uni-

'versal revelation, which takes place through the

'contemplation of nature and man's own reason;

'that the sacred authors did not write under the 'immediate inspiration of the Spirit of God: that

'Christianity was not designed to teach any incom-

' prehensible truths and doctrines, but only to con-

'firm the religious teaching of reason; and that

' man neither can nor should accept any doctrine to

be true which cannot be recognised and proved to

' him by reason."

It were easy to show that, in one at least of these ways, Mr Pattison himself is a rationalist. He may denounce the study of the evidences under that name, but he has no scruple in applying a subjective test to the sacred contents of revelation. Speaking of the speculative objections of the English Deists, he tells us that-'The objections urged 'against revelation in the course of the deistical ' controversy, were no chimeras of a sickly brain. ' but solid charges; the points brought into public ' discussion were the points at which the revealed ' system itself impinges on human reason. No time ' can lessen whatever force there may be in the ob-' jection against a miracle; it is felt in one century ' as strongly as in another.' Speaking, again, of the more practical objections which weigh most with

<sup>\*</sup> Dewar, 'German Protestantism,' p. 17.

the popular mind, he adds that, while the mass of the public cannot judge of speculative questions, 'it is otherwise with the greater part of the points raised in the deistical controversy. It is not the speculative reason of the few, but the natural conscience of the many, that questions the extirpation of the Canaanites, or the eternity of hell torments. 'These are points of divinity that are at once funda-'mental and popular.' Now this is what we mean by Rationalism-a presumptuous attempt to foreclose the question of miracles, by bringing it to the tribunal of reason, instead of trying it on the ground of historical evidence, and to subject the works and the judgments of God to the criticism and censure of the natural conscience of man. The man who reasons thus is a rationalist; but no man is a rationalist merely, because, in the right and legitimate exercise of all his faculties, he examines the evidences, or interprets the meaning, of the 'oracles of God.'

Mr Pattison seems to imagine that writers on the evidences are justly chargeable with Rationalism, when they institute a comparison between natural and revealed religion, and found an argument in favour of the latter on its accordance or analogy with the former. There might be some ground for this imputation were natural religion a mere product of reason, an ideal creation of the human mind; but is it so? Is it not, in so far as it is true, a mere interpretation of the lessons of the great volume of nature? and can there be any ground for a charge

of Rationalism when a comparison is instituted. not between the contents of Scripture and the fancies of men, but between the Works and the Word of God? May not reason recognise the authority of either volume, and be dutifully submissive to Divine teaching in both? The essayist quotes a sentence from the writings of Robert Ferguson, to the effect that some truths of natural religion have been incorporated with revelation, and have thus both a natural and supernatural attestation. This is true; but it is very far from sustaining his charge of Rationalism against those who illustrate both the natural evidence of these truths, and the authority of the Scriptures, by which they are ratified and confirmed. As he has referred to the writings of Ferguson, whose unsavoury reputation as a political schemer, although attested both by Burnet and Macaulay, should not shut our eyes to his undeniable ability as a divine, which is clearly proved by his treatise entitled, 'Justification only on a Satisfac-'tion,' and still more by his larger work, 'The In-' terest of Reason in Religion,' we can only express our regret that he did not quote more largely from the latter; and, to supply his lack of service in this respect, we offer a few extracts which may be commended to the serious attention of those who cannot distinguish between the use and abuse of reason in. matters of faith:- 'Whatever can be made appear ' to be in a contradiction to reason, we profess our-' selves ready to disclaim. But we are apt to believe

that a great deal, which only crosseth some and lubricous principles that dogmatists have tized by that name, falls under the imputatio disagreement with reason. The repugnancy reason, fastened upon some tenets, is sometimes result of ignorance, prepossession, and lust, ra than their contrariety to universal reason, or genuine maxims of it.' 'There can be no ac ' faith without a previous exercise of our intell about the things to be believed. Faith b ' nothing but an unwavering assent to some doct upon the account of a Divine testimony, our re-' must be antecedently persuaded that the testin is Divine, before it can assent to the doctrine u the authority and veracity of the revealer.' ' ' authority of God in the Scripture is the for reason of assent to such and such doctrines, bu is by the means and exercise of our intellec ' faculties that we come to understand such a claration to proceed from God, and that t things are the sense of such and such proposition

In short, reason is, according to the memor aphorism of Bacon, 'the minister and interprete 'nature;' and reason is also, for the same reamd in the same sense, 'the minister and interprete of Scripture. Whatever authority belongs to naise the rule of judgment and the ultimate stand of appeal in the domain of science, the same aurity belongs to Scripture in the region of far Degerando speaks of a philosophical Rational

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which substitutes speculative reason for practical experience in the one, just as we complain of a religious Rationalism, which supersedes the authority of Scripture, by the presumptuous theories of reason in the other. In either case, reason is a mere interpreter, and as such a scholar, not a censor or a judge.

We have dwelt the longer on his description of Rationalism, because it furnishes the key to his whole doctrine, when he proceeds to give an account of the progress and results of the great controversy between the Christian Apologists and the Deists of the eighteenth century. That controversy, which was carried on for more than a century, is divided into two periods; during the first, the advocates of Christianity are supposed to have insisted chiefly on the internal evidence: and during the second, on the external or historical proofs. This can only be intended to mark the prevailing character of the discussion in each period; for Mr Pattison cannot be ignorant of the fact, that both the internal and the external evidences were, to some extent, adduced in both periods, the miraculous and historical proofs having been largely illustrated by Richard Baxter, among others, in his admirable treatises on the Evidences, and the internal proofs having been adduced at a later period by such writers as Jennings, Erskine, and Gurney. But all alike, from Locke to Whately, are summarily char-

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acterized as rationalists, for no other reason, apparently, than that they were 'ready to give a reason ' for the faith which was in them.' But while we demur to this sweeping application of the term, we are free to confess that the writers who treated of the 'Reasonableness of Christianity,' were too prone to lower the sublime mysteries of Christianity to the level of mere human reason; and hence, as Dr Pusey informs us, in his work on the 'Theology of 'Germany,' 'the constant appeal to the rationality ' of Christianity, which led Tindal to conceive of it ' as a mere republication of the religion of nature, 'was extensively encouraged in Germany by the translation of the works of the earlier English 'Apologists.' We confess also, for we have often painfully felt, that in the second period, that of the external and historical evidences, there was an absence of that evangelical teaching without which the heart and conscience remain unimpressed, even when the intellect is enlightened, and perhaps convinced. In a certain modified sense, therefore, a sense duly defined and strictly guarded, this period may be described as the seculum rationalisticum of the Church of England; but we are far from agreeing with the essayist in the estimate which he has formed either of the results of the controversy, or of the merits of those who were engaged in it on either side. seems to have a far higher appreciation of the Deists, and a much stronger sympathy with them, than he has evinced towards those able and learned cham-

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pions for the truth who 'contended earnestly for the ' faith once delivered to the saints.' He speaks of the deistical objections as 'not new and unseasoned ' objections, but such as had worn well, and had borne the rub of controversy, because they were ' genuine,' and of the deistical writers as being 'many of them men of worth and probity,' 'not worse ' men than the average of their class in life.' And the result of the whole controversy is stated as if it were a drawn battle. 'Upon the whole, the writ-'ings of that period are serviceable to us chiefly as 'showing what can and what cannot be effected by ' common-sense thinking in theology. It is of little 'consequence to inquire whether or not the objec-' tions of the Deists and Socinians were removed by the answers brought to meet them. Perhaps, on the ' whole, we might be borne out in saying that the ' defence is at least as good as the attack; and so, ' that even on the ground of common reason, the ' Christian evidences may be arranged in such a way 'as to balance the common-sense improbability of 'the supernatural—that is, there are three chances 'to one for revelation, and only two against it.' ('Tracts for the Times.') 'But that result forces on the mind the conviction, that either religious ' faith has no existence, or that it must be to be 'reached by some other road than that of the 'trial of the witnesses.' The Christian Apologists are thus described: 'One might say the Apologists of that day had left the bench for the bar, and

taken a brief for the Apostles. They are impatient 'at the smallest demur, and deny loudly that there ' is any weight in anything advanced by their opponents. In the way they override the most serious difficulties: they show anything but the temper which is supposed to qualify for the weighing of evidence. The astonishing want of candour in their reasonings, their blindness to real difficulty, the illconcealed predetermination to find a particular verdict, the rise of their style in passion in the same ' proportion as their argument fails in strength, constitute a class of writers more calculated than any other to damage their own cause with young in-' genuous minds.' 'Some exceptions, doubtless, there ' are to the inconclusiveness of this debate.' All this is fitted to leave a painful impression of uncertainty and doubt in regard to the author's views. We look in vain for any explicit acknowledgment of the Divine authority of revelation, or of any one of its peculiar proofs or doctrines. He does not, indeed, discard, like Professor Powell, the miraculous evidence, nor does he carp, like Dr Williams, at predictive prophecy; but on a review of the whole deistical controversy, he affirms the insufficiency of any proof founded on 'the trial of the witnesses.' If you ask, 'on what basis, then, is revelation supposed to rest-whether on authority, on the inward light, on reason, or on self-evidencing Scrip-' ture?'—the oracle is silent; he gives no reply. With these views it is not wonderful that he should

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be dissatisfied with the present state of the Church of England, but we were not prepared to expect such an account of it from one who has subscribed her articles, and has recently entered on 'a cure of ' souls.' 'In the present day,' he says, 'when a godless ' orthodoxy threatens, as in the fifteenth century, to extinguish religious thought altogether, and 'nothing is allowed in the Church of England but the formulæ of past thinkings, which have long ' lost any sense of any kind. . . . When it (religion) is stiffened into phrases, and these phrases are ' declared to be objects of reverence but not of intelli-' gence, it is on the way to become a useless encumbrance, the rubbish of the past, blocking the road. 'Theology then retires into the position it occupies ' in the Church of Rome at present, an unmeaning ' frostwork of dogma, out of all relation to the actual ' history of man.' Such is the state of doctrine in the Church of England; and what is the state of the Christian evidences? 'The career of the evi-' dential school, its success and failure,—its success in ' vindicating the ethical part of Christianity, and the ' regulative aspect of revealed truth,—its failure in 'establishing the supernatural and speculative part. ' have enriched the history of doctrine with a com-' plete refutation of that method as an instrument of ' theological investigation.'

We offer no comment on this significant statement; but we earnestly recommend those who would form a just estimate of the great argument maintained

by the English Apologists against the Deists of the eighteenth century, to study Dr Leland's 'Review of the Deistical Writers,' a work in which they will find all the recent objections of infidelity anticipated, and answered by calm, judicious, and conclusive arguments.

#### No. VII.

#### 'THE INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE."

THE essay of Professor Jowett is greatly superior. both in substance and style, to any other paper in the volume. His masculine ability and ripe scholarship are generally acknowledged; and all who know anything of the state of Oxford must be aware of the powerful influence which he has acquired, and is now exerting, for good or evil, at that ancient seat of learning, and of the enthusiastic personal attachment with which he is regarded by many ardent admirers among the rising hopes of the Church. There is much, too, that is both interesting and instructive in his present disquisition, as might have been expected from one whose attention has been long directed to the principles and methods both of classical and scriptural interpretation. Yet there are some important points on which we feel constrained, however reluctantly, to differ from him; and to these we must now briefly advert.

Professor Jowett introduces his subject by a state-ment designed, apparently, to assure his readers that, whatever differences of opinion may exist respecting

By Benjamin Jowett, M.A., Regius Professor of Greek in the University of Oxford.

the interpretation of Scripture, there is an entire agreement in regard to Scripture itself. 'All Christians receive the Old and New Testaments as sacred writings, but they are not agreed about the meaning which they attribute to them. The Book itself remains as at the first; the commentators seem rather to reflect the changing atmosphere of the 'world or of the Church.' And again, at a later stage, 'The Scriptures are a bond of union to the whole Christian world. No one denies their author-'ity: and could all be brought to an intelligence of their true meaning, all might come to agree in ' matters of religion.' These statements seem to imply, and may have been designed to convey the impression, that all worthy to be called 'Christians' do equally, and in the same sense, 'receive the Old ' and New Testaments as sacred writings,' and that none 'deny their authority.' But is this a correct statement of the fact? Are there none among those whom Professor Jowett recognises as Christians who are not agreed as to what books, or what parts of books, belong to these 'writings,' and still less as to the sense, and the extent, in which they are to be held 'sacred?' Does he mean these statements to apply to his own colleagues and associates in the preparation of the 'Essays and Reviews?' and to affirm that they are not Christians, since undeniably one of them rejects the Mosaic narrative of creation. another the prophecies which these writings contain, another the miracles which they record, and another

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all that is supernatural in the scheme which they unfold? It will be a hard task for Mr Jowett to reconcile these statements with the declared sentiments of his fellow-labourers, and yet continue to recognise their claim to be regarded as 'Christians.'

But it will be a harder task still to reconcile them with his own doctrine in regard to the sacred writings. and the admissions which the force of truth compels him to make respecting the causes of that diversity of interpretation of which he complains. He had surely overlooked these statements, or entirely forgotten them, when, on the same page in which they occur. he wrote as follows:-- 'Philosophical differences are ' in the background, into which the differences about 'Scripture also resolve themselves. They seem to ' run up at last into a difference of opinion respect-'ing revelation itself-whether given beside the ' human faculties or through them, whether an in-' terruption of the laws of nature, or their perfec-'tion and fulfilment.' He speaks evidently of 'dif-'ferences about Scripture,' as well as about the interpretation of it; and of these he says, most truly, that they 'run up at last into a difference of opinion ' respecting revelation itself,' an admission which it would be a hard task to reconcile with his previous statement, that 'all Christians receive the Old and 'New Testaments as sacred writings;' or with his subsequent one, that ' no one denies their authority.' And what is this 'difference of opinion respecting re-'velation itself?' Is it a difference of little moment,

or one of considerable magnitude? What are the questions which are raised by it? We are afraid to offer an articulate statement of them in our own words, for his language is somewhat obscure, if not ambiguous; but here they are as stated by himself: whether revelation was 'given beside the human faculties, or through them-whether an interruption of the laws of nature, or their perfection and 'fulfilment.' For our own part, we are at a loss to discover whether the two clauses refer to distinct questions, or to one and the same question, considered only in different aspects, and expressed in different terms. We are equally at a loss to understand the distinction which seems to be indicated between a revelation given 'beside the human faculties, or through them; for we never happened to hear of any revelation to which the former expression could apply; but one thing is clear—the question raised respecting revelation itself amounts in substance to this, whether it should be regarded as natural or supernatural, or whether it can be held to imply an interruption of natural laws? If this be the question, we must have the whole deistical controversy over again; we have to deal with men who deny, or doubt, the whole supernatural element in Christianity-that element which is incorporated with the 'sacred writings,' and interwoven with their very texture. We are not prepared to enter on the task of interpretation, for as yet we know not what we have to interpret, or whether it be the Word of

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God or the word of man; and how, then, can it be said with truth that the Old and New Testaments are received by all as 'sacred writings,' or that 'no 'one denies their authority?'

Referring again, not to Scripture, but to the interpretation of Scripture, and to the injurious influence upon it. arising out of 'party efforts to wrest 'its meaning to different sides,' Professor Jowett adds-'There are, however, deeper reasons which have hindered the natural meaning of the text from ' immediately and universally prevailing. . . . No one would interpret Scripture as many do, but for certain previous suppositions with which we come 'to the perusal of it.' And what are these 'pre-' vious suppositions' which are so injurious to the interpretation of Scripture? 'There can be no error in the Word of God, therefore the discrepancies in the books of Kings and Chronicles are only ap-' parent, or may be attributed to differences in the 'copies.' 'It is a thousand times more likely that ' the interpreter should err than the inspired writer.' ' For a like reason the failure of a prophecy is never ' admitted, in spite of Scripture and of history.' Here are some specimens of the sort of 'previous sup-' positions' which he reprobates as injurious to the interpretation of Scripture, and which he, at least, has no scruple 'to draw out of their hiding-place to ' the light of day.' And what are they adduced to prove? Can it be that the interpreter should proceed on the opposite suppositions—that there may be

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some, perhaps much, error in 'the Word of God,' and that the interpreter is at least not more likely to err than 'the inspired writer?'

But this leads on to another question-Were the sacred writers inspired, and, if they were, in what sense and in what way? In his examination of some prior questions which lie in the way of a reasonable criticism of the sacred text, Professor Jowett introduces the question of inspiration, and tells us that ' almost all Christians agree in the word, which use ' and tradition have consecrated to express'-what? the Divine influence which guided the penmen of Scripture? or the infallible character which it imparted to their writings? No, but—'the reverence which they truly feel for the Old and New Testaments. But here the agreement of opinion ends; the meaning of inspiration has been variously ex-' plained, or more often passed over in silence from a fear of stirring the difficulties that would arise ' about it.' He afterwards enumerates various contrasted opinions about inspiration, and the last is mentioned thus:—'There is a view of inspiration which recognises only its supernatural and pro-' phetic character, and a view of inspiration which regards the Apostles and Evangelists as equally ' inspired in their writings and in their lives, and in both receiving the guidance of the Spirit of 'Truth in a manner not different in kind, but only 'in degree, from ordinary Christians.' 'Nor,' says

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he, 'for any of the higher or supernatural views of inspiration, is there any foundation in the Gospels or Epistles. There is no appearance in their writ-'ings, that the Evangelists or Apostles had any inward gift, or were subject to any power external to them, different from that of preaching or teach-'ing, which they daily exercised; nor do they anywhere lead us to suppose that they were free from 'error or infirmity.' Every reader of the Bible is as competent to judge on this point as Mr Jowett him-We quote the words not to refute them, but to bring out his real meaning; and to enable our readers to understand that when he says, 'all are ' agreed about the word inspiration,'-that 'all Chris-' tians receive the Old and New Testaments as sacred ' writings,'-that 'no one denies their authority,'-he intends merely to intimate that they are inspired in . the same sense in which his own essay is inspired, although, perhaps, in a higher degree; and that the only authority which belongs to them arises from that portion of truth, be it less or more, which they contain, and which we must ascertain for ourselves. by discriminating, as we best may, between the truth and the error which is mixed with it, in the exercise of our own 'verifying faculty.' What, then, becomes of the Bible? Can it now be called the Word of God? Is it a supernatural revelation of truth from the mind of God to the mind of man? Or is it the natural product of human intelligence? there anything in it that can be said to be peculiarly

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Divine, or was there anything miraculous in its origin? 'That these truths, instead of floating down the stream of tradition, or being lost in ritual ob-' servances, have been preserved for ever in a book. is one of the many blessings which the Jewish and

' Christian revelations have conferred on the world-

'a blessing not the less real, because it is not neces-

' sary to attribute it to miraculous causes.'

If there was nothing supernatural either in revelation itself, or in the record in which it was to be preserved, the question naturally arises-What necessity could exist for any supernatural attestations or for any miraculous evidence? Professor Jowett does not face that question so boldly as some of his associates had done; he does not venture, like Professor Powell, to construct an à priori proof, founded, too, on induction, against the credibility of miracles; nor does he, like Dr Williams, discard all prophecy, partly, perhaps, because this had been already done to his hands; but he utters no protest against their views, and gives at least some significant indications of his own. For not only does he tell us that it is not necessary to ascribe the Book containing the Jewish and Christian revelation to 'miraculous causes,' but adds, very much in the spirit and style of Powell's speculations-'It may ' hereafter appear as natural to the majority of man-'kind to see the Providence of God in the order of the world, as it once was to appeal to interruptions 'of it;' while, in regard to the whole historical

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evidence, Mr Pattison himself may welcome him as a powerful auxiliary, when he says-' From the fact that Paley or Butler were regarded in their gene-'ration as supplying a triumphant answer to the 'enemies of Scripture, we cannot argue that their 'answer will be satisfactory to those who inquire ' into such subjects in our own.' In regard, again, to prophecy, we are told that 'he who would under-' stand the nature of prophecy in the Old Testament. 'should have the courage to examine how far its details were minutely fulfilled. The absence of ' such a fulfilment may further lead him to discover, that he took the letter for the spirit, in expecting 'it.' It is further stated, that 'the diversity among 'German writers on prophecy is far less than among 'English ones'—a statement which may possibly refer to the 'pathway streaming with light from ' Eichhorn to Ewald,' of which Dr Williams speaks, but which is utterly astounding as coming from Professor Jowett, who must know, unless his reading has been all on one side, or has not kept pace with German literature, that in no country in the world has there been such a revolution of opinion on the subject of prophecy as in Germany, and that, too, in the right direction, under the auspices of Hengstenberg and his distinguished fellow-labourers in the same field.

But we must leave these topics, important as they are, and pass on to the consideration of what should

be, from its title, the main subject of his essay—the interpretation of Scripture. And here, if anywhere, we might expect from one, who has the reputation of being an accomplished scholar and philosophical divine, a well-digested and comprehensive statement of sound principles, such as might be a safe guide in biblical exegesis. We have been grievously disappointed; for, while many excellent remarks occur in his prolix disquisition on this favourite theme, the radical principles of his theory appear to us to be unsound and erroneous. We submit three specimens to the judgment of our readers.

The first is his fundamental canon, that the Bible is to be interpreted just like any other book, - 'However different the subject, although the interpretation of Scripture requires "a vision and faculty " divine," or at least a moral and religious interest which is not needed in the study of a Greek poet or philosopher, yet in what may be termed the 'externals of interpretation—that is to say, the ' meaning of words, the connection of sentences, ' the settlement of the text, the evidence of facts, ' the same rules apply to the Old and New Testa-' ments as to other books.' 'What remains may be 'comprised in a few precepts, or rather in the ex-' pansion of a single one. Interpret the Scripture ' like any other book. There are many respects in which the Scripture is unlike any other book; these will appear in the results of such an inter-' pretation.' 'When interpreted like any other book,

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by the same rules of evidence and the same canons of criticism, the Bible will still remain unlike any 'other book.' His own admissions are sufficient to show that his fundamental canon of interpretation is incomplete, if not erroneous; and if we would take in both the points of resemblance and the points of difference between the Bible and all other books, we must substitute a more comprehensive rule, such as the following:—'In so far as the Bible resembles other books, as having been written in human language, it must be interpreted by the same rules of evidence and the same canons of criticism as are applicable to any other book; but in so far as it differs from all other books, as being of Divine, and not of mere human origin, it must have a method of interpretation such as is peculiar to itself alone.' The importance of the addition which we have made to his first canon of interpretation, as well as the necessity which calls for it, may not be apparent at first sight, but will become manifest as we advance. In the meantime, we have only to suppose that there may be something peculiar to itself, either in the substance or in the structure of revelation, or in both-that it contains, for example, a series of prophetical predictions, or a system of typical prefiguration, such as it never entered into the mind of man to conceive, and such as has no parallel in any human writings whatever; suppose this, which is at least conceivable, and will it not follow as a self-evident consequence that, while every

sentence is expressed in human language, and, to this extent, subject to the ordinary rules of grammatical interpretation, a higher organon than mere literary criticism may be necessary to elicit its deeper meaning, to unfold the relations of its various parts. and to afford a key to its profounder mysteries? The peculiar character of revelation, in this respect, is overlooked or ignored by Professor Jowett, just as it seems to have escaped the notice of Lowth in his 'Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews.' We can easily conceive that the proposed addition to his favourite canon may call forth only a smile of pity or a scornful sneer; and for this reason, we shall quote the authority of two distinguished writers, whom no scholar in Oxford will even affect to despise. first is Lord Bacon, in his 'Advancement of Learn-'ing;'-'The Scriptures being given by inspiration, ' and not by human reason, do differ from all other books in the author; which, by consequence, doth ' draw on some difference to be used by the expositor . . . . I do much condemn that interpretation of the Scriptures, which is only after the manner as ' men use to interpret a profane book.' The second is Dr Tatham, in his 'Chart and Scale of Truth:'-· Considering the Holy Scriptures as different from all other books in their origin, intention, and execution, the theological student should check the ' career of this classical and sentimental criticism, however elegant and ingenious, to concentrate his chief attention on the mysterious and appropriate

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'end of the parabolic style. He should awfully bear 'in mind that a vast and various chain of prophecy 'was employed by the Omniscient Dictator of reli-'gion as its concomitant and standing evidence. . . 'He will think that fanciful and sentimental criti-'cism, even were it employed with the utmost

'safety, and without the least presumption, is a very 'trifling and inferior office, when contrasted with 'that of the sacred interpreter, engaged in a serious 'investigation of the curious structure of this style, 'which, however varied, is uniform and consistent, '—comparing one part with another, in order to

'develop the secret intention of the Spirit of Pro-'phecy, as it comes to be evolved in the prophetical 'event.' Fortified by these authorities—and they might be multiplied ad libitum—we can only accept his first canon of interpretation in so far as the Bible resembles every other book, while we reject it in so

of man.

Another principle which he lays down to guide us in the interpretation of Scripture, may be regarded as a corollary from the former: but as it is distinct

far as 'the Word of God' may differ from the word

as a corollary from the former; but, as it is distinct from it in some respects, and is applied by him in a peculiar way to some points of the greatest practical importance, it requires separate notice. It is that Scripture has only one sense, which is exclusive of all mysterious or double meanings. 'Is it admitted,' he asks, 'that the Scripture has one, and only one, 'true meaning? Or are we to follow the fathers

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'into mystical and allegorical explanations? with the majority of modern interpreters, to confine ourselves to the double sense of prophecy and the symbolism of the Gospel in the law?' 'The ' true glory and note of divinity' in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures is said to be 'not that they have 'hidden, mysterious, or double meanings, but a ' simple or universal one, which is beyond them and ' will survive them.' 'The book itself,' we are told, remains, as at the first, unchanged among the changing interpretations of it; and the office of the interpreter is not to add another, but to recover the original one; the meaning, that is, of the words as they first struck on the cars or flashed before ' the eyes of those who heard and read them.' Thisis his second canon—that 'Scripture has one, and only one, true meaning; and what use does he make of it? He applies it to shut out everything like typical prefiguration, and to set aside what has been called the double sense,—but what might be more correctly described as the twofold reference-of Prophecy; and it is at this point that the practical importance of his first canon, as well as its close connection with the second, begins to become manifest. 'The Protestant divine who perceives that the types ' and figures of the Old Testament are employed by 'Roman Catholics in support of the tenets of their 'Church will be careful not to use weapons which ' it is impossible to guide, and which may, with equal force, be turned against himself. Those who have

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' handled them on the Protestant side have before ' now fallen victims to them, not observing, as they 'fell, that it was by their own hand.' 'Those who ' remonstrate against double senses, allegorical inter-' pretations, forced reconcilements, find themselves ' met by a sort of presupposition that "God speaks not "as man speaks." A change in some of the prevail-' ing modes of interpretation is not so much a matter of expediency as of necessity. . . From the circumstance, that in former ages, there has been a fourfold or a sevenfold interpretation of Scripture, we cannot ' argue to the possibility of upholding any other than ' the original one in our own. . . And what we give ' up as a general principle we shall find it impossible ' to maintain partially, e.g., in the types of the Mosaic ' law and the double meanings of prophecy, at least in ' any sense in which it is not equally applicable to all ' deep and suggestive writings.' These statements are evidently intended to exclude everything like typical prefiguration, as well as the twofold reference of prophecy; and if they are made with a certain reservation, amounting to a confession that, at least to the Jewish mind, the typical import of certain rites, and the double sense of prophecy were familiar, the admission is not designed to modify his general doctrine, but rather to prepare the way for a third -. canon which is its necessary corollary and complement, and which will be noticed in due time.

'What judgment, then, should be pronounced on his second rule of interpretation as it is thus stated

and applied? We answer, that there is a sense in which the rule itself might be accepted as at once sound and useful, and as such it is recognised and adopted by the Westminster divines when they say that 'the true and full sense of any Scripture is not ' manifold, but one;' but that this sense is neither exclusive of typical prefiguration, nor of the twofold reference of prophecy, and cannot therefore be the sense in which Professor Jowett understands it. It is not the rule itself, but rather the meaning which he attaches to the rule, and the application which he makes of it, to which all sound interpreters will object. They admit and deplore as much as himself the excess of mystical and allegorical interpretation which, in ancient times, received the sanction of Origen, and at a later day was partially revived in the writings of Cocceius; and they will cheerfully allow him to refute, or even to ridicule, any method which has a tendency to make the Bible a mere ' Gallus in campanili,' a 'weathercock on the church ' tower;' or, in more familiar phrase, a nose of wax, which may be twisted and moulded at the pleasure of any dexterous manipulator. But Professor Jowett errs egregiously if he imagines that the whole question as to the right interpretation of Scripture is settled, when it is agreed that 'the true and full ' sense of Scripture is not manifold, but one;' and that this rule will of itself foreclose the inquiry as to the import of types and the sense of prophecy. He must have taken a miserably narrow view of the

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history, and must have formed a singularly shallow conception of the conditions of biblical interpretation, if he can for a moment suppose that these momentous topics can be dismissed in this summary Supposing that, according to his first canon. the Bible is to be interpreted like any other book: and, according to his second, that the Scripture has one, and only one, true meaning, the question would still remain-How is that one true meaning to be ascertained when, as often happens, the same words refer to two different things, one of which is employed to represent or to illustrate another? There is room for such a question with reference even to other books than the Bible. For, supposing that every passage has only one true meaning, it is still competent, and even necessary, to ask-What is the rule for tropical interpretation, when one thing is made the symbol or figure of another, and a material object is called in to represent or illustrate a spiritual truth? And when the detached simile or metaphor is converted into a sustained allegory, will the mere canon that every sentence has one, and only one, true meaning enable us at once to determine what is the meaning of such a work as the 'Pilgrim's Progress' of Bunyan, or entitle us to say that there is no difference between its literal and spiritual signification? And if from human authorship we pass to that which is Divine, what shall we say of the marvellous parables of Scripture—those Divinely invented vehicles of the

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highest moral and spiritual instruction? May we not say that their 'true and full sense is not mani-'fold but one,' and yet distinguish between the earthly similitude which is employed as a type or figure, and the spiritual lesson which it is designed to teach? And if we are thus compelled to admit, in regard to the parables of the New Testament, that there is a difference between the literal story and the spiritual truth, while they are so related as to yield only one true sense, why should it be thought incredible either that the rites and events of the Old Testament had a typical import as 'figures for the time then present,' and 'shadows of good things to come,' or that the prophecies of the Old Testament might refer, in the first instance, to some one or other of these types, which was itself prophetic, and thus add to their own native sense the additional significance which they may be said to borrow from the type? It is on some such principle as we have thus briefly indicated, that recent interpreters have vindicated the typology of Scripture, and explained the twofold reference of prophecy; and it says little for the extent of his reading if Professor Jowett was ignorant of the fact, and still less for his candour, if, knowing it he took no notice of it. Bellarmine himself speaks only of a twofold sense of Scripture, the literal and the spiritual; the former being subdivided into the simple and the figurative, and the latter into the allegorical, tropological, and anagogic; and in this

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he is followed by Perrone, 'Nos cum communi the-'ologorum et interpretum sententià docimus, solum 'literalem sensum eum tandem esse qui argumenta

'præbere theologo possit ad dogmata evincenda ac 'vindicanda.' But neither the one nor the other ever dreamt of supposing that the admission of one,

and only one, true sense of Scripture, shut them up to the denial of typical prefiguration, or the twofold reference of prophecy. And no more did the great

'and various senses. We affirm that there is but 'one true, proper, and genuine sense of Scripture, 'arising from the words rightly understood, which

Whitaker, who says, 'We deny that there are many

'we call the literal; and we contend that allegories, 'tropologies, and anagoges are not various senses, 'but various collections from one sense, or various ap-

'plications or accommodations of that one meaning.' But on this whole class of subjects we can only refer our readers to Davison's 'Discourses on Prophecy,' Fairbairn's 'Typology of Scripture,' and Conybeare's

'Bampton Lectures for 1824,' in which an attempt is made to trace the history, and to ascertain the limits, of the secondary and spiritual interpretation of Scripture.

We have already hinted that Professor Jowett, in stating his views of Old Testament type and prophecy, makes a certain reservation, amounting to a confession that, at least to the Jewish mind, the typical import of certain rites and the double reference of prophecy were familiar, but that this admission was

not designed to modify his general doctrine on the subject. We are now to see in what sense it is to be understood, and to what consequences it must necessarily lead. 'It is true,' he says, 'that there are types in Scripture which were regarded as such by the Jews themselves, as, for example, the scape-' goat or the paschal lamb.' He does not say whether the Jews were right or wrong in so regarding them, nor does he even explain the origin of such an opinion if there were no solid foundation for it; he simply admits the fact, which he could hardly deny, that the Jews, right or wrong, did suppose their ritual to be a figure or shadow of 'good things to come;' and we are now to see how he deals with that fact, in connection with the teaching of our Lord and His apostles. He finds it necessary to have recourse to a third principle of interpretation, which is indeed the natural corollary and necessary complement of the two already mentioned, and which may be justly characterized as the principle of accommodation applied to the language of our Lord Himself. It was not enough to say that 'the Bible must be inter-' preted like all other books,' for as the Word of God it might have a deeper significancy, and other methods of instruction, than such as are common to it with the writings of men; nor was it enough to say that 'the Scripture can have but one true sense,' for unfortunately the Jews saw in the scapegoat and the paschal lamb the types or figures of the Messiah whom they were taught to expect; it was further

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necessary to show that the opinion of the Jews was ntterly groundless, and not only so, but that when our Lord and His apostles referred to and applied the types and prophecies of the Old Testament, they did so only in accommodation to the prevailing opinions of the times—the popular prejudices of the nation to which they belonged. It is almost incredible that a Christian man, holding office in connection with the Church of England, should have penned the following sentences:- 'The religion of 'Christ was first taught by an application of the words of the Psalms and the Prophets. Our Lord ' Himself sanctions the application. "Can there be "a better use of Scripture than that which is made "by Scripture?" .Or any more likely method of ' teaching Christianity "than that by which they "were first taught?" For it may be argued that the 'critical interpretation of Scripture is a device almost ' of yesterday; it is the vocation of the scholar or 'philosopher, not of the apostle or prophet. ' new truth, which was introduced into the Old 'Testament, rather than the old truth which was ' found there, was the salvation and the conversion of the world. There are many quotations from 'the Psalms and the prophets in the Epistles, in 'which the meaning is quickened or spiritualized; 'but hardly any, probably none, which is based on the original sense or context. That is not so 'singular a phenomenon as may at first sight be 'imagined. It may appear strange to us that Scrip-

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ture should be interpreted in Scripture in a manner not altogether in agreement with modern criticism; but would it not be more strange that it should be interpreted otherwise than in agreement with the ideas of the age or country in which it was written? The observation that there is such an agreement, leads to two conclusions, which have a bearing on our present subject. First, it is a reason for not insisting on the applications which the New Testament makes of passages in the Old as their real meaning. Secondly, it gives authority and precedent for the use of similar applications in our own day.'

If there be meaning in language, these words must be held to imply that our Lord and His apostles,-in quoting from the Psalms and the prophets,—and in applying them, be it remembered, in proof of His claims to be received as the Messiah promised to ' the fathers,'-made use of 'new truth which was in-\* troduced into the Old Testament,' rather than ' of the old truth which was found there;' that 'hardly ' any, probably none,' of their many quotations was based on the original sense or context;' that in thus quoting and applying Scripture they accommodated it so as to be 'in agreement with the ideas of the age or country in which it was written;' and that this disingenuous, perhaps we should say 'free, handling of the "Word of God"-this attempt, onot to free it from the repetition of conventional · language and from traditional methods of treat-

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'ment,' but to bind it in the shackles of Jewish

error for ever-this corrupt admixture of their own false interpretations with the pure letter of Scripture. ' was the salvation and the conversion of the world!' Looking at it even from his own point of view. Professor Jowett might be expected to see, if not the sinfulness of tampering in this way with the real meaning of the Old Testament, yet at least the great improbability that the highest lessons of the most advanced modern criticism should have been anticipated at so early a time. He thinks it strange. indeed, that Scripture should have been then interpreted in 'a manner not altogether in agree-'ment with modern criticism:' but where is the difference? Is it not the fair application of the 'ideological' principle to the interpretation of the Old Testament, and is it not expressly referred to as giving 'authority and precedent for the use of simi-' lar applications in our own day?' He deduces two conclusions from the supposed treatment by our Lord and His apostles of the Scriptures of the Old Testament; the first is, that we are not to regard their interpretation as the real meaning; and the second, that we may warrantably interpret Scripture in the same way-that is, that the interpreter of Scripture is not bound to adhere to its real meaning, but may superinduce his own opinions, especially if they be in agreement with the spirit of the age, on that which he professes to treat, notwithstanding,

as the 'Word of God.' And this is part of Pro-

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fessor Jowett's canon for the interpretation of Scripture!

He adopts the Rationalistic method, and thus reaches a non-natural sense of Scripture. Mr Palmer, speaking of Newman's reasoning in favour of 'the system of interpreting Scripture, not in a literal, but in a mystical and allegorical sense,' says, 'Rationalism has the benefit of the argument to the fullest extent. Its method of interpreting Scripture is wholly mystical and allegorical. All the miracles are "mythical:" all the facts of the Gospel are "mythical," embodying certain truths or lessons; the Gospel itself is one great "mythus;" the existence of Christ is a "mythus."' . . . 'In fact, this system is fully developed only by such writers as Strauss or Bruno Bauer, to whom the whole of revelation-even the creation (of the world), and the existence of Christ, becomes a " mythus.""

Had he merely said that some passages in the Old Testament, which cannot be proved to have a designed typical reference, are applied in the New to the purposes of religious instruction,—just as the events of common history may be, by their involving a general principle, applicable to more conditions than one; or even that the prophecies of the Old Testament had a primary reference to persons or occurrences belonging to that dispensation, and can only be extended beyond it on the supposition of a typical relation established between them and the

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person and kingdom of the future Messiah, he might have escaped censure, while he could have had no claim to originality; but when he denies that there was any type or prophecy which, in its original meaning, bore reference to the Messiah, and that our Lord put a new meaning into the Scriptures which did not exist there before, we can only express our surprise that he stopped short at his 'two conclusions,' and did not venture on a third, which has already been suggested to him, on the ground of strict logical sequence, by the author of 'Neo-' Christianity' in the Westminster Review.

We have thus examined his chief canons of interpretation; we proceed to offer a few specimens of his own criticisms on the language of Scripture, which may serve also as illustrations of his doctrinal peculiarities.

The first that we select, both because it occurs, repeatedly in the course of his essay and because it relates to a passage which seems to be a special favourite with his fellow-labourers in the same field, is his criticism on the words, 'Henceforth there shall 'be no more this proverb in the house of Israel.' 'A change,' we are told, 'passes over the Jewish 'religion'... from the 'visitation of the sins of 'the fathers upon the children' to 'every soul shall bear its own iniquity.' Dr Temple had referred to the same passage as an appeal from the Mosaic law to the feeling of 'natural equity;' Professor

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Jowett adduces it as a proof of a 'progressive revelation,' in which the error of a former age was rectified by the better views of a more advanced one: while both writers seem to regard it as conclusive against the doctrine which teaches that 'God visits the iniquities of the fathers on the children.' Every one knows that a thorough discussion of this theological question on its merits, and even a sound critical decision on the meaning of the particular passage referred to, must necessarily take into account such considerations as these :- First, that the phrase, Visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the child-' ren unto the third and fourth generations,' is incorporated with the decalogue itself, which was designed to be the standing and permanent law at least of the Jewish Church, and that it formed part of the Second Commandment, which no prophet had authority to abrogate or right to ignore; secondly, that it occurs in the most solemn revelation of Jehovah's name. which is connected with the glory of His infinite perfections, when 'The Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with Moses, and proclaimed the name of the Lord-"The Lord, the Lord God, merciful " and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in good-" ness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, " forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and "that will by no means clear the guilty, visiting "the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, " and upon the children's children, unto the third " and fourth generation;" thirdly, that so far from

denying, the prophet expressly admits, that the Jews were suffering in part on account of their fathers' sins; for their captivity was caused by the guilt of Manassch and the men of his times who did evil in Jerusalem which the Lord would not pardon (Ezek. ix. 6: Jer. xv. 4; 2 Kings xxiv. 3); fourthly, that the prophet never once refers to the words of Moses, but only to a popular perversion of his doctrine, which had become so common as to pass for a proverb-' The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the 'children's teeth are set on edge '-a proverb which implied that they were suffering only, or at least chiefly, on account of their fathers' sins, not of their own; whereas the prophet, seeking to awaken their consciences, tells them that although they were sent into captivity by the sins of those who had gone before them, yet what kept them there, and hindered their return to their own land, was only their own wilful impenitence and unbelief, and that as soon as they repented and returned to the Lord, they would be graciously restored; and, fifthly, that the effect of his faithful but tender remonstrance was to awaken a sense of godly contrition, under which the faithful among them were led to confess at once their own sins and the sins of their fathers, in these touching and impressive words—'Our fathers ' have sinned and are not, and we have borne their ' iniquities-the crown is fallen from our head; woe 'unto us that we have sinned.' 'Howbeit Thou art ' just in all that is brought upon us; for Thou hast

done right but we have done wickedly.'—(Lam. v. 7, 16; Neh. ix. 32.) Let any one who is competent to judge of moral evidence say whether all these considerations are not relevant to the point at issue, when the question relates to the right interpretation of the passage to which Professor Jowett refers; and yet he takes no notice of them; he harps upon the proverb which it was the Prophet's object to rebuke and denounce—he embraces it as if it were a portion of God's truth, and a portion of it that was better than the Second Commandment of the decalogue itself.

As another specimen of his critical interpretations, we may merely advert to what he says of some passages bearing on the Divinity of Christ. We deeply regret to say that every criticism which he has offered tends in the direction that is opposite to the recognition of that fundamental truth. ' received translation of Philipp. ii. 6 ("Who being "in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be "equal with God"), or of Rom. iii. 25 ("Whom "God hath set forth to be a propitiation through "faith in His blood"), or Rom. xv. 5 ("God, even "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"), though 'erroneous, are not given up without a struggle; the 1st Tim. iii. 16, and 1st John v. 7 (the three ' witnesses), though the first ("God manifest in the "flesh") is not found in the best manuscripts, and ' the second in no Greek manuscript worth speaking of, have not yet disappeared from the editions of

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'the Greek Testament commonly in use in England, 'and still less from the English translation. An 'English commentator, who, with Lachmann and 'Tischendorf, supported also by the authority of 'Erasmus, ventures to alter the punctuation of the 'doxology in Romans ix. 5 ("Who is over all, God "blessed for ever"), hardly escapes the charge of 'heresy.' He refers to Rom. i. 2, and Philipp. ii. 6, as passages which would lose their meaning if distributed between our Lord's divinity and humanity. He argues, indeed, against the old Socinian interpretation; but has he said one word that is inconsistent with the Arian scheme, or that goes so far as the admissions of Dr Ellis in his 'Half Century of

But he may be the more easily excused for this, since he seems to be of opinion that it is difficult, if not impossible, to prove any doctrine from Scripture. 'Nor is it easy to say what is the meaning of "prove" ing a doctrine from Scripture." For when we 'demand logical equivalents and similarity of circumstances—when we balance adverse statements '—St James and St Paul, the New Testament with 'the Old—it will be hard to demonstrate from Scripture any complex system, either of doctrine or 'practice.' On his views this conclusion need excite no surprise, it is the logical result of his theory; for he speaks of a 'progressive revelation,' such as is not only less perfect or comparatively incomplete merely

in its earlier stages, but necessarily imperfect also as

' Unitarianism?'

containing some errors which must be subsequently corrected or neutralised; and as the whole record is placed before us, containing both the earlier errors and the subsequent amendments, of course it would require a strong 'verifying faculty' to prove any doctrine whatever from Scripture.

More than once, in the course of these papers, we have suggested the question-' What think ye ' of Christ?' Were that question proposed to Professor Jowett, he would no doubt say, 'I revere and 'love Him. I own Him as my Master and Lord.' Nothing indeed can be more touching than his allusions to Christ; he seems to cling to His image as the ideal of all moral excellence, perhaps as the last barrier betwixt his soul and utter unbelief. There is, even at times, a deep pathos, an undertone of sadness, in his words when he speaks on this theme, as if he felt or feared that some of his other views might prove to be at variance with his belief in the personal character of Christ. He has not yet impeached that character, as Newman and Greig have ventured to do; but there is no resting-place for the sole of his foot in his present position-he must retrace his steps or advance as consistency demands: -he has either gone too far, or has not gone far enough; for no man can long believe that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, the Messiah predicted and prefigured in the Old Testament, endowed with miraculous powers, and commissioned to impart these powers to His followers, and yet maintain his

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perfect truthfulness and moral honesty, while he denies the reality of miracles, the predictive force of prophecy, the typical meaning of the Old Testament, the supernatural element in revelation, and the authority of the Bible as God's Word.

#### No. VIII.

# THE GENERAL SCHEME OF THOUGHT WHICH PERVADES THE ENTIRE VOLUME.

HAVING examined the several 'Essays and Reviews' separately and successively, with the view of ascertaining the sentiments of each of the writers, and the statements for which they are individually responsible, we propose now to take a comprehensive survey of the whole series, considered collectively, as the public manifesto of a school or sect which has sprung up within the bosom of the Church of England, and which can hardly fail to be regarded as one of the most ominous signs of the times. aim will be mainly directed, not to the criticism of minute details or the refutation of particular errors, but to the exposition of the general scheme of thought, or system of doctrine, which pervades the entire volume from its commencement to its close. It will be our honest endeavour to extract from its multifarious and miscellaneous contents the grand leading positions which it is designed to establish, and the fundamental conceptions or assumptions on which they ultimately depend; to explain their connection with one another as constituent parts of one consistent and consecutive scheme of thought, all

London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts.

springing from the same radical principles, and directed to the same practical ends; and to lay bare the concealed links and ligaments by which they are indissolubly bound together as articles of the same philosophic creed.

In doing so, we leave in abeyance, or rather we leave to the consciences of the compilers of this volume, the question which has been naturally raised in regard to the nature and extent of their individual responsibility in connection with its contents. Considering, however, that they have inserted a prefatory notice 'to the reader,' to the effect that 'the ' authors are responsible for their respective articles ' only,' and that, under the shelter of this disclaimer. some of them may be disposed to plead exemption from the grave and serious charges which certain parts of the work would warrant and justify, we think it right to say that however they may 'have 'written,' as they tell us, 'in entire independence ' of each other, and without concert or comparison.' they must have concurred, at least, in issuing that notice 'to the reader,' or in authorising some one to prepare it in their name; and that by that very notice, under which some may be seeking to shield themselves from serious blame, they stand committed to the general object of the volume, which ' is the free handling of subjects peculiarly liable to 'suffer by the repetition of conventional language 'and from traditional methods of treatment.' To this extent they were committed from the first,

They entered voluntarily into a virtual copartnery for that specific object, 'the free handling,'-of course 'in a becoming spirit,'-of the most sacred subjects which can engage the thoughts of men; and if, after the appearance of the volume, any of them had begun to feel that their confidence in some of their colleagues was misplaced, and that they had suffered themselves to be unwarily entrapped into a seeming complicity with flagrant infidelity, what honest Englishman would hesitate to come forward and disclaim publicly all participation in sentiments, which he might be supposed to sanction, but which he utterly abhorred? But we feel it the less necessary to discuss the question as to the joint liability of these writers for the contents of this volume. partly because none of them, so far as we know, have publicly repudiated any part of it; and still more, because there is enough in each of the Essays, considered by itself, to show that they are all fellowworkers in the same cause, that they all belong to the same school, and that they all contribute, more or less, in different ways and with various degrees of ability, to the construction of the same general scheme of thought. We have said of the only layman among them, that his statements are less offensive than those of most of his clerical associates; but even he insists that the Bible contains a mixture of truth and error, and presses upon us the alternative of either modifying our whole idea of revelation, or rejecting a part of the canonical Scriptures.

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adopts for himself the former of these alternatives: and this modified view of revelation, followed out to its legitimate results, would lead to all the conclusions which are rigorously deduced from it by his more daring associates, and especially by Dr Williams and Professor Jowett. But their relative shares in the work of destruction is a question of comparatively little moment to the Christian public: the great outstanding fact remains, that here is a volume. emanating from ministers and members of the Church of England, which assails the articles of her creed and the authority of the Bible itself; and, we say it advisedly, the gain of the whole world would not tempt us to speak of the record of Divine revelation and its precious contents as it has been spoken of in every one of the 'Essays and Reviews.'

But, in dealing with this volume, we must not content ourselves with marking merely some erroneous views with regard to the record of revelation, the number and integrity of the books which belong to it, or the nature of its various contents; the radical error lies much deeper down and further back than any heresy respecting the mere canon of Scripture. It is one which might well serve to supersede any great solicitude about the determination of a canon at all, and which might equally serve to evacuate its authority were the same canon universally received. The great ultimate question which is raised, relates not so much to the record of revelation as to the nature of revelation itself; and it is

in their views on this fundamental point that we find the root of every branch of the new system—the spring and fountain-head of all its other errors, which flow from it as naturally and as necessarily as various streams of water descend by different channels from their parent source.

The first and most fundamental error of the whole system—that which may be described as its gowror Jaudec, and from which all its other errors follow as inevitable corollaries—consists in the assumption that revelation does not imply the supernatural communication of truth from the mind of God to the mind of man, but merely the discovery or perception of truth on man's part in the exercise of his own natural faculties. In a certain sense God may be said to be our teacher, for He is the 'Father of 'our spirits' and also the 'Father of lights, from ' whom cometh down every good and perfect gift;' every ray of truth, therefore, that beams on our minds may be traced to Him as its sempiternal source, who is 'the very God of truth;' but it is a natural revelation only which is admitted, while a supernatural revelation is denied. We cordially admit the former, while we strenuously contend also for the latter. It is a great truth, and one which is too often overlooked or disregarded, that God is really our teacher even in natural things; that we are indebted to Him, who has endowed us with organs of sense and noble faculties, rational and moral, and surrounded us with objects which

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are fitted to call them into active exercise, for all our common secular knowledge, which is so indispensable for the purposes of the present life; and that He should be reverentially acknowledged as the revealer, in this sense,\* of all true science, as well as the source of all religious truth, whether natural or The Scriptures speak of a natural reverevealed. lation both of secular and religious truth; of the former, when speaking of one of the common arts of life, agriculture and husbandry, the prophet says of the ploughman—' His God doth instruct him to dis-'cretion, and doth teach him.' 'This also cometh ' forth from the Lord of Hosts, who is wonderful in . 'counsel and excellent in working' (Is. xxviii. 26, 29); and of the former, when speaking of the natural evidence for the existence and perfections of God, the Apostle says, with reference even to the Gentiles--'That which may be known of God is manifest ' to them, for God hath showed it unto them (parspér ' iori, i yap Osis aurois igaripus.). For the invisible ' things of Him, from the creation of the world, are ' clearly seen, being understood by the things that ' are made, even His eternal power and Godhead.' So far from being jealous, therefore, of the doctrine which affirms a natural revelation of truth, and ascribes it ultimately to God as its author, we cordially receive it as a lesson which should imbue science itself with a religious spirit, and which may well afford a presumption that since God is our teacher

. Note G.

in regard to natural things and the interests of the present life, He may also condescend to become our instructor in heavenly things, if we be indeed moral and responsible beings, placed in a state of probation now, and destined to an eternal life hereafter. The error of the authors of the 'Essays and Reviews' does not consist, then, in the recognition of a natural revelation of truth, or in ascribing that revelation to God as its author, but in the denial of any supernatural revelation of His mind and will, and the exclusion of any communication of objective truth on His part, even to the minds of the holy apostles and prophets.

But is it possible, it may be asked, that, with the. Bible in their hands, any well-educated Englishmen, and, still more, any ordained ministers of the Church, can have committed themselves to such a theory of revelation as this? Let every reader judge for himself; but let him form his opinion on a careful consideration of all the passages in which everything supernatural is derided or disowned. Dr Williams speaks of 'an irrational supernaturalism,'-of that repressive idea of revelation,'-and of 'the ' idea of revelation being widened for the old world, and deepened for ourselves.' He adds, 'There is, hardly any greater question than whether history shows Almighty God to have trained mankind by 'a-faith which has reason and conscience for its \* kindred, or by one to whose miraculous tests their

' pride must bow;' and he speaks with evident ap-

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proval of 'the more liberal (not to say rationalising) criticism which traces revelation historically within the sphere of nature and humanity.' He quotes, with faint censure. Bunsen's outspoken question. ' How long shall we bear this fiction of an external 'revelation?' Dr Temple has gone so far as to say of the personal presence of our Lord Himself. that, 'Had His revelation been delayed till now, assuredly it would have been hard for us to re-' cognise His Divinity, for the faculty of faith has ' turned inward, and cannot now accept any outer 'manifestations of the truth of God.' Professor Powell admits that 'the idea of a positive external Divine revelation of some kind has formed the very basis of all hitherto received systems of Chris-' tian belief;' but he adds, 'Considerations of a very different nature are now introduced from those for-' merly entertained, and of a kind which affect the entire primary conception of a revelation and its 'authority, and not merely any alleged external 'attestations of its truth.' And Professor Jowett, speaking of 'the differences about Scripture,' makes the important admission, that 'They seem to run up ' at last into a difference of opinion respecting revela-' tion itself,—whether given beside the human facul-' ties or through them, whether an interruption of 'the laws of nature, or their perfection and ful-' filment'

This is really the ultimate question—Was there, or was there not, in the case of prophets and apostles,

a supernatural revelation of the mind and will of God, an objective presentation of truth, such as was undiscoverable by man's natural faculties, and such as neither reason nor conscience could suggest, however they might receive and respond to it? Or, to throw the question into another form-Was there anything taught by the prophets and apostles when they spoke in the name of God, and made use of these solemn words, 'Thus saith the Lord,' which was not the product of their own reason and conscience, but a message supernaturally revealed to themselves, which they were commissioned to proclaim to others, and which was to be received and obeyed on the sole authority of the revealer? If there was nothing of this kind, then every part of the theory of this volume may be established without difficulty; for a supernatural communication of truth from the mind of God to His commissioned servants being excluded, the very foundation of Scripture, and its Divine authority, is swept away. But if a real revelation of the mind and will of God he admitted, such as is additional to the natural dictates of man's reason and conscience, then a firm foundation is laid both for a scheme of miraculous attestation, such as might be necessary to establish the Divine commission of His chosen messengers. and also the Divine authority of the record to which that revelation might be consigned.

The theory which denies an external supernatural revelation, and traces revelation merely 'within the

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sphere of nature and humanity,' by ascribing it to the natural exercise of man's reason and conscience. is at direct variance with the whole tenor of Scripture, and utterly subversive of the foundation of Christian faith and hope. It is at variance with the whole tenor of Scripture, in which God is everywhere represented as making known to men His sovereign will, and summoning them to believe and obev His word. Without referring to the innumerable instances in which He is represented as revealing Himself to the patriarchs and prophets, we select two facts—the one lying at the foundation of the Jewish, the other, of the Christian dispensation. We ask the writers of this volume-Was there, or was there not, an external supernatural revelation when God proclaimed the law amidst the thunder and lightnings of Sinai? And, again, was there, or was there not, an external supernatural revelation when 'God, manifest in the flesh,' 'spake as never man spake?' These questions are direct and simple, and no honest mind will seek to evade them. Let them be fairly faced and explicitly answered. It is mere drivelling to say that, supposing them to be real revelations, they could only take effect by quickening the reason and the conscience of those to whom they were addressed; the question is not as to the manner of their efficacy, but as to their nature and origin, and the authority which rightfully belonged to them? Were they subjective or objective—the

products of man's natural faculties, or a super-

natural expression of God's mind and will? the theory which represents revelation as given, not ' beside the human faculties,' but 'through them;' not as 'an interruption of the laws of nature,' but 'as their perfection and fulfilment,' is at direct variance with the whole tenor of Scripture, so it is utterly subversive of the foundation of Christian faith and hope. What is Christian faith, considered simply as belief, but the reception of Divine truth on the ground of Divine testimony,-in other words, on the authority of the Revealer? And what is Christian hope but a firm persuasion of the sure fulfilment of God's promises? If there be no supernatural revelation, can there be the slightest foundation for Are there not truths depending on the sovereign will and sole appointment of God, which can neither be discovered by the unaided light of nature, nor even proved, when revealed, otherwise than by the testimony of His word? And do not these truths—the peculiar lessons of revelation—constitute the only ground of our faith and hope as Christians? The Westminster divines have drawn a strong line of demarcation between natural and revealed religion, when they say-'Although the ' light of nature, and the works of creation and providence, do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, ' and power of God as to leave men inexcusable, yet ' are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God and of His will which is necessary unto sal-'vation, therefore it pleased the Lord, at sundry

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times, and in divers manners, to reveal Himself, ' and to declare that His will to the Church.' This is the great object of a supernatural communication of Divine truth: to make known what was undiscoverable by the light of nature, and dependent on the sovereign will and appointment of God Himself. Some such revelation was necessary, and was vouchsafed in the state of innocence itself to make known the terms on which man might surely reckon on the continuance of a holy and happy life in the enjoyment of God's favour and fellowship, which was made to depend on his believing the word and obeying the will of God as embodied in a positive precent, the most searching test of a submissive and dutiful spirit; and how much more is it necessary now, when, as fallen and depraved creatures, we are concerned to know whether God will forgive the guilty and restore the lost, and if so, in what way and on what terms? and when our own hearts are ever prompting questions which reason can neither answer nor allay—such as the anxious and almost despairing cry, 'How shall 'a man be just with God?' 'What must I do to be 'saved?' 'What good thing shall I do that I may 'inherit eternal life?' None other than a Divine answer can meet and satisfy the longings of a truly awakened soul; it must be taught what is the will of God for its salvation: it can lean only on His own faithful word of promise; and what is the worth of a promise but the known character of him by whom it is made? For this reason the Apostle insists on

the authority of the Revealer as the sure ground of the believer's confidence and hope:—'God, willing 'more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise 'the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an 'oath; that by two immutable things in which it 'was impossible for God to lie, we might have a 'strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay 'hold upon the hope set before us.'

We have enlarged the longer on this point, because it is the real hinge on which the whole discussion turns. It is not a question about the mere record of revelation, it is a question about the nature and origin of revelation itself. According to the writers of this volume, the record of revelation contains a mixture of truth and error-and this of itself is a grave and serious objection to their views; but this is not all, for they deny that even that portion of truth, be it less or more, which is contained in Scripture, was supernaturally revealed, and contend, that it was developed merely by man's natural faculties, and may 'be traced within the sphere of nature and ' humanity.' Their theory, therefore, in its ultimate analysis, is a scheme of mere naturalism, as opposed to all that is supernatural, in religion.

The second error of their system is also fundamental, as it affects the Divine authority both of the prophets and apostles in proclaiming the truth, and also of the Holy Scriptures, in which the truth was committed to writing—it relates to the nature of inspiration. The two terms, revelation and inspiration, are often used indiscriminately; but it may be useful. in some respects, to distinguish between them, and to employ the one to denote the supernatural presentation or conveyance of Divine truth to the minds of the prophets and apostles themselves, while the other is applied to describe the supernatural impulse. guidance, and direction under which they spoke or wrote when they were commissioned to communicate that truth for the benefit of their fellow-men. speaking of the nature of inspiration, we do not refer to the mode or the measure in which it was imparted, in regard to which some diversity of opinion has arisen among those who were at one as to the substance of the doctrine itself; we refer only to its nature, as it is represented by the authors of this volume, who employ the term, much in the same way as they speak of revelation, as denoting, not a supernatural influence prompting and enabling the prophets and apostles to speak and to write as infallible teachers of Divine truth, but simply as a natural inspiration, the same in kind with that which is felt by every man of elevated genius, or every Christian of devout mind, although it might be different, perhaps, from both, in respect to the measure of its fulness or the degree of its intensity.

Here, again, we can conceive that many a thoughtful man will be ready to ask—Is it possible that, with the Bible in their hands, and knowing it also to

be in the hands of all their people, any ordained ministers of the Church of England can have committed themselves to such a theory of inspiration as this? Again, we say, let every reader judge for himself. Listen to Dr Williams :- 'If such a Spirit ' (the Eternal Spirit) did not dwell in the Church, the Bible would not be inspired; for the Bible is, before all things,-the voice of the congregation, Bold as such a theory of inspiration may sound, it was the earliest creed of the Church, and it is the only one to which the facts of Scripture answer. The sacred writers acknowledge themselves men of bike passions with ourselves, and we are promised illumination from the Spirit which dwelt in them. ' Hence, when we find our Prayer-book constructed on the idea of the Church being an inspired society, instead of objecting that every one of us is fallible, we should define inspiration consistently with the facts of Scripture and of human nature. ' would neither exclude the idea of fallibility among ' Israelites of old, nor teach us to quench the Spirit in true hearts for ever. But if any one prefers thinking the sacred writers passionless machines, and calling Luther and Milton uninspired, let him co-operate in researches by which his theory, if true, will be triumphantly confirmed.' Mark here - The Bible is, before all other things, the written 'voice of the congregation;' 'the Church is an ' inspired society;' we are inspired as well as the apostles; they were fallible as well as we; Luther

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and Milton were not uninspired. Listen now to Professor Powell:-- 'The philosophy of the age does ' not discredit the inspiration of prophets and apostles. ' though it may sometimes believe it in poets, legis-' lators, philosophers, and others gifted with high 'genius,' Listen again to Professor Jowett:-- 'The 'nature of inspiration can only be known from the examination of Scripture. There is no other source to which we can turn for information, and we have 'no right to assume some imaginary doctrine of inspiration like the infallibility of the Roman Catho-'lie Church.' This seems to promise well; but let not the reader rashly assume that he has the writer's full meaning all at once; let him remember that on the kindred doctrine of revelation Professor Jowett commenced by saying that, 'all Christians receive ' the Old and New Testaments as sacred writings;' and yet it turned out after all that they differed about them very materially, and that their differences 'seem to run up at last into a difference of opinion re-'specting revelation itself.' And so in the case of inspiration; the appeal to Scripture, which he recommends, will be found very different from what some readers might expect it to be. He lavs down 'two ' considerations' which we should bear in mind: the first is that inspiration, whatever it be, 'is a fact ' which we infer from the study of Scripture—not ' of one portion only, but of the whole'—the last clause being evidently intended to intimate that we are not to form our notion of the nature of inspiration

from those passages only in which the Scriptures expressly speak of their own inspiration, and from which we might expect to derive our clearest views of it: but from a general survey of the whole contents of Scripture, and our own 'inferences' from the facts which meet us there. The second is, that any true doctrine of inspiration must conform to ' all well-ascertained facts of history or of science; for the same fact cannot be true in religion when seen by the light of faith, and untrue in science when looked ' at through the medium of evidence or experiment.' These are his two considerations which are to decide the whole question as to the nature of that inspiration which the sacred writers claim for themselves and their writings: and what use does he make of them? In applying the first, he says it must obviously be such an inspiration as 'embraces writings of very different kinds-the book of Esther, for example, or the Song of Solomon, as well as the Gospel of St John. It is reconcilable with the \* mixed good and evil of the characters of the Old 'Testament, which nevertheless does not exclude them from the favour of God,—with the attribution to the Divine Being of actions at variance with that ' higher revelation which He has given of Himself ' in the Gospel; it is not inconsistent with imperfect or opposite aspects of the truth, as in the book of Job or Ecclesiastes,—with variations of fact in the ' Gospels or the books of Kings and Chronicles,—with ' inaccuracies of language in the Epistles of St Paul:

for these are all found in Scripture; neither is there any reason why they should not be, except a ' general impression that Scripture ought to have 'been written in a way different from what it has.' And, in applying the second, he says, 'Almost all intelligent persons are agreed that the earth has ' existed for myriads of ages; the best informed are of opinion that the history of nations extends back some thousand years before the Mosaic chronology: ' recent discoveries in geology may, perhaps, open ' a further vista of existence for the human species, ' while it is possible, and may one day be known, that ' mankind spread not from one but from many centres ' over the globe; or, as others say, that the supply of ' links which are at present wanting in the chain of ' animal life may lead to new conclusions respecting the origin of man.' Our notion of inspiration must, in short, be sufficiently elastic to adapt itself to every new discovery of science, and not only so, but to the mere 'guesses' of to-day which may afterwards become certainties. In all the other essays incidental expressions occur sufficient to indicate a general agreement among the writers on the nature of inspiration.

We are warranted in concluding that, according to the doctrine of this volume, the holy apostles and prophets, the writers of our 'sacred books,' had no inspiration that was, at least in kind, peculiar to themselves, but only a higher degree of that which is common to all Christians who enjoy the aid of the Spirit, and even of all men who are endowed with

reason and conscience; that the inspiration which they possessed was not a supernatural grace, but a natural gift: that it did not make them infallible teachers of truth, but left them, even in their public ministry and the preparation of the Scriptures, liable to error like other men; and that whatever claim they may have made to supernatural illumination and Divine direction and guidance, must be tested by the accordance of that claim with the contents of Scripture, the discoveries of science, and the wildest guesses of speculative conjecture. We demur to the conditions of the argument as they are laid down by Professor Jowett. Every sound and honest interpreter of Scripture will give his chief attention, in the first instance, to those express testimonics which bear directly on the question of inspiration, -which affirm its reality and illustrate its nature,—and refer to it as that which imparts to the Bible its awful authority as the 'Word of God,' and its right to demand the belief and obedience of all to whom it is addressed. We insist on a sound interpretation of these testimonics, in the first instance, and especially on a serious consideration of what our Lord and His apostles said of the Old Testament Scriptures, when they spoke of them as 'the lively oracles,' 'the oracles of God,' 'the Scripture that cannot be broken,' 'the Scripture that must be fulfilled,' the law which was so unchangeable that 'heaven and earth might pass away, but not one jot or tittle of it should fail till all be fulfilled;'-we insist on this, first of all, before

we can consent to look at the subordinate considerations which he thrusts on the foreground; and then. with the light of a scriptural doctrine of inspiration in our hands, we can calmly survey the whole contents of Scripture, and all the ascertained results of sound science, in the confident persuasion that the Word of God will be found consistent with itself. and that His works and His Word cannot be at real variance. And if, on comparing Scripture with Scripture, there should appear to be some discrepancy between one part and another; or, on comparing Scripture with science, some difficulty in harmonising the statements of the one with the discoveries of the other, we shall only regard these as so many stimuli to further inquiry, with a view to the more perfect interpretation both of nature and Scripture; while we content ourselves in the meantime with such hypothetical solutions as are sufficient to neutralise objections—solutions which the present state of our knowledge may suggest, while it may not enable us to determine which of several ought to be preferred.\* But all these difficulties, real or imaginary, were they a thousand times more formidable than they are, would not deter us from the public avowal of our adherence to that doctrine of inspiration which we have learned from the teaching of the Lord and His apostles.

The third error of the system which is developed

• See Note E, already referred to.

in this volume is a natural sequence from those which have already been examined. It is, that no supernatural attestations are either necessary or admissible as proofs of a Divine revelation. If there be nothing supernatural in the communication of truth to the minds of prophets and apostles, and nothing supernatural in the inspiration by which they imparted that truth to the minds of others by their preaching or their writings,—if, in either case, they were left to the exercise of their natural faculties, prompted, indeed, by higher intuitions and guided by a deeper wisdom than are common to men, but still fallible, as all others are, and subject to the illusions of fancy or the prevailing prejudices of their age and country, -what necessity can possibly exist for their being endowed with miraculous or prophetic powers, or how could it be supposed that such powers would be divinely vouchsafed to give credit and currency to the teaching of men who were, in no other respect, supernaturally qualified for their office and work? The same considerations which prove that all supernatural attestations were unnecessary, are sufficient also to prove that they were utterly inadmissible in On the supposition, indeed, of a supersuch a case. natural communication of religious truth, otherwise undiscoverable, from the mind of God to the mind of man, and of the supernatural inspiration of prophets and apostles, who claimed a special Divine commission to preach in His name, and to write 'sacred books' which should be of universal and

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permanent authority, some extraordinary credentials might be required to establish their peculiar claims, and to impose an obligation on others to acknowledge and submit to their prerogatives as 'ambassadors for 'Christ;' but when that supposition is set aside, and 'revelation is traced within the sphere of nature and 'humanity,' there is no need, and no room, for any supernatural manifestation whatever.

Every honest reader of his Bible must be aware. that its whole tenor, from its commencement to its close, implies the reality of a supernatural communication of truth from God to man, accompanied with supernatural evidence, and incorporated along with its evidence, not only in the standing ordinances of the Church, but also in a series of sacred writings. designed to perpetuate and transmit the knowledge of both from age to age. But now, in opposition to this undeniable testimony of Scripture, certain writers and ministers of the Church of England have attempted to divest Christianity of everything supernatural, by denying the occurrence, and even the possibility, of miracles,—the existence as well as the fulfilment of predictive prophecy,—and the whole scheme of typical prefiguration, by which the Old Testament was indissolubly connected with the New. We have read many infidel works, but we know of none more thoroughly opposed, at all points, to the whole doctrine of the supernatural in revealed religion than the volume of 'Essays and Reviews.'

How do they speak of miracles? One writer tells

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us that 'the deluge takes its place among geological phenomena, no longer a disturbance of law from 'which science shrinks;' that 'the avenger who slew the first-born may have been the Bedouin 'host;' and that 'the passage of the Red Sea ' may be interpreted with the latitude of poetry.' Another writer, more daring still, founds an argument against the credibility of miracles on the order and uniformity of nature, as established by inductive science—an argument which he could not fail to know, and probably would not have scrupled to acknowledge, must be as conclusive against the supernatural creation of the world as against the miraculous attestations of Christianity. 'The entire ' range of the inductive philosophy is at once based 'upon, and in every instance tends to confirm, by immense accumulation of evidence, the grand truth of the universal order and constancy of natural causes, as a primary law of belief, so strongly enter-' tained and fixed in the mind of every truly inductive inquirer, that he can hardly even conceive the ' possibility of its failure.' 'The proposition "that "an event may be so incredible intrinsically as to "set aside any degree of testimony" in no way applies to, or affects, the honesty or veracity of that testimony, or the reality of the impressions on the minds of the witnesses, so far as it relates to the matter of sensible fact merely. It merely means this; that from the nature of our antecedent convictions, the probability of some kind of mistake

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' somewhere, though we know not where, is greater than the probability of the event really happening 'in the way, and from the causes assigned.' It is useless to multiply quotations when a principle of this kind is laid down; a principle which goes far beyond the speculations of Laplace and the scepticism of Hume, who both admitted that in certain circumstances, not likely in their opinion to arise, the evidence of a miraculous occurrence might be irresistible, and which can only find its parallel in the fundamental assumption of Strauss,—that whatever is miraculous in any narrative must be regarded and treated as unhistorical, and explained on the principle of mythical interpretation.\* There is nothing formidable, nothing even that is new or original, in this fresh attack on the evidence of miracles. Any one who has carefully studied Leslie's 'Rules,' as given in his 'Short and Easy Method with the ' Deists,' will see that the question has been far more profoundly argued, and with a much deeper insight into its real merits, by previous writers, and will be proof against all the dogmatical assertions of the late Savilian Professor at Oxford. We cannot discuss the question on its general merits; we can only indicate a few lines of thought which may be profitably followed out. Let the reader consider the nature. extent, and limits of sound inductive science. does not deal with what is possible or impossible, but with what actually is: it takes cognisance only

Note H. See also Note B.

of facts, and seeks simply to co-ordinate these facts under general laws; and, even in its widest and highest generalisations, it is bound not only to take into account all the facts bearing on its conclusions which have been already ascertained, but to leave room also for any new facts which may subsequently emerge, and which may serve to modify the statement of such laws as had been provisionally adopted while our knowledge was less complete. It cannot determine, therefore, on the ground of any presumtion à priori, either what is impossible to occur under the Divine government, or even what would be unworthy of the Divine perfections in the administration of the world's affairs,—unless where the supposed event involves a manifest contradiction, or can be clearly shown to be at variance, not with our views, but with the moral perfections of the Divine Being. It is competent to entertain the quid est? it is utterly incompetent to the task of determining quid possibile est? or quid oportet? Yet Professor Powell undertakes to demonstrate the intrinsic incredibility of miracles on the ground of the results of inductive science; and in doing so, has only shown his utter ignorance of the real nature and legitimate use of inductive science itself. It is this tendency to push induction beyond its proper limits, and to found upon it abstract conclusions on points of mere speculation, or dogmatic assertions as to the genesis of worlds, the origination of life by spontaneous generation and the transmutation of species, which

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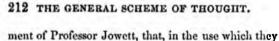
has awakened that icalousy of science, of which philosophical writers complain, in the minds of many religious men, who have no repugnance whatever to the study of the facts and laws of nature, when these are presented apart from the speculations with which they have been combined. The supposed impossibility of any interruption of the physical order of nature is one of those unauthorised assumptions for which inductive science is in no When correctly understood respect responsible. and applied, induction would take account of all the known facts of the case, both such as fall under our own experience and observation, and such as are brought to our knowledge by authentic testimony: -for a large proportion of the facts on which the generalisations of science itself are based, rest on no other evidence than the reports of observers in other lands or in former ages. When mention is made. therefore, of 'the universal order and constancy of 'natural causes,' and when this is applied to preclude the supposition of miraculous events, the argument is chargeable with a flagrant petitio principii similar to that which is involved in Hume's argument; since it excludes some facts which, whether real or the reverse, have at least been attested by numerous witnesses, and their testimony must be dealt with, in the first instance, on the ordinary principles of historical evidence, before any one is entitled to assume the uninterrupted constancy of nature. When these facts are taken into account,

they may serve to modify our conclusion, to the extent of substituting general for universal in the formula by which it is expressed; for the general constancy of nature is admitted on all hands, and is implied in the very idea of a miracle itself. But the general constancy of nature does not exclude the possibility of exceptional cases or extraordinary events arising from the interposition of a Supreme power, which is superior to all physical causes, and capable of controlling them for the accomplishment of His high designs with reference to the moral and spiritual benefit of men; events which do not imply the universal suspension or permanent reversal of any natural laws, but merely the interruption of their operation in a few particular instances and for certain specific ends. Paley's argument, 'if ' there be a God, miracles are not impossible,' is selfevidently conclusive; and it is poorly met by Professor Powell's reply, that nature being a finite product, natural theology can know nothing of Omnipotence; since every one must see that nature may be a real manifestation, without being an adequate measure, of His 'eternal power and Godhead.'

Miracles being thus disposed of, prophecy, in so far as it is predictive—and typical rites, persons, and events, in so far as they are prefigurative—must share the same fate. Prophecy was merely a means of moral instruction, and was not designed as a 'prognostication' of the future. There are no Messianic predictions in the Old Testament; or if there

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be a few which still seem to be such, they are fast melting away in the crucible of modern criticism. The 53d chapter of Isaiah had no reference to 'the 'Man of Sorrows' who 'was wounded for our trans-' gressions and bruised for our injunities,' but found its fulfilment in the personal history of Jeremiah, or in the national history of the Jews. The Book of Daniel was not written by him, and at all events, it was a narrative, and not a predictive, work. Let the English reader take up his Bible, and follow the line of the Divine dispensations as they are successively unfolded, and then, without entering into any controversy about particular texts, let him say, on a survey of the whole scheme, whether, from the first announcement of a future Saviour immediately after the fall, there was not a continuous stream of prophecy, always pointing forward to things not seen as vet, but destined to come into existence hereafter, which imparted a provisional and preparatory character to each of the successive eras of the patriarchs, the law and the prophets; and, whether the whole of the Old Testament would not be evacuated of its highest meaning, were it supposed to have no fulfilment in the new and better dispensation of the fulness of times? And, in regard to the great scheme of typical prefiguration, which may be called a visible, as prophecy was a verbal, method of prediction, and which was applied as such by our Lord and His apostles in proof of His Messianic character, who can read, without horror and indignation, the state-



made of the types, 'New truth was introduced into 'the Old Testament, rather than the old truth which was found there;' and that of the quotations from the Psalms and the prophets, 'Hardly any, perhaps 'none, is based on the original text or context?'

All supernatural attestations are thus discarded, miracles, prophecies, and types; and no wonder, since a supernatural revelation of Divine truth, and a supernatural inspiration of prophets and apostles had been already rejected. It remains to inquire how far these views must necessarily affect the character and authority of the record of revelation.

#### No. IX.

# THE GENERAL SCHEME OF THOUGHT WHICH PERVADES THE ENTIRE VOLUME.

On a first perusal of this volume, the fragmentary and miscellaneous character of its contents is apt to leave the impression that it is nothing more than a series of detached pieces, strung together without any regard to order or method, having little mutual connection with each other, and no common bearing on one specific and definite 'result. But on looking beneath the surface, and examining more closely its constituent parts, we find, on comparing them with one another, that there is a certain method underlying this apparent disorder; we begin to see the outlines of a systematic plan, and discover the leading principles of a connected and well-digested scheme of thought, such as could only be developed by a series of writers belonging to the same school, imbued with the same spirit, and aiming at the same practical ends. It is far from being a mere collection of loose papers, such as might appear together in one of our quarterly reviews; it is a real, though not a methodical, exposition of a system of opinion on some of the most important subjects of human thought, in which each part has a close relation to

every other, while all the parts, when put together, constitute a complete theory of speculative unbelief.

The fundamental conception on which the whole superstructure depends, is that of the nature of revelation, as consisting, not in the supernatural communication of truth from the mind of God to the mind of man, but in the perception or discovery of it merely by man's natural faculties, quickened, it may be, by a certain Divine influence, but not informed by any positive external teaching, and never transcending 'the sphere of nature and humanity.' Such being the nature of revelation, it follows that there could be no necessity for any supernatural inspiration, either to enlighten the minds of the prophets and apostles, or to enable them to impart the truth to others by their preaching or their writings; it was enough if they were endowed with the Spirit in the same way in which all Christians are inspired with it, or even all men of extraordinary ability and And since there is thus nothing that is properly supernatural, either in the revelation of the truth, or in the inspiration which qualified them to teach it, it follows, again, that all supernatural attestations may be dispensed with as evidently superfluous in such a case; and hence the whole magnificent scheme of miraculous interposition, prophetical prediction, and typical prefiguration, suitable as it might be, and even necessary, to authenticate a Divine supernatural revelation, and to establish the Divine commission and authority of God's inspired

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messengers, is ruthlessly cast aside as having neither place nor use in the new 'negative theology.'

But the system, to be complete, must be carried out to all its legitimate results; it cannot stop short at this point; it is rolling down an inclined plane with ever-increasing velocity, and no human power can arrest its progress till it sinks into the abyss. It has effectually disposed of a supernatural revelation in former times; it must now deal with the record of revelation which is still in our hands, and determine its claims to be regarded as a standing and authoritative rule of faith and practice in the present day. The question is forced on the writers of this volume, and they must face it-' Is the Bible to be received as the Word of God or as the word of man?' A solemn question, as every one must feel who has a living conscience in his bosom and a soul that needs to be saved.

To do them justice, the writers of this volume do not refuse to entertain the question, and they have given us sufficiently clear indications of the answer which they are disposed to return to it. We mark, therefore, as the *fourth* cardinal error of their theory, the doctrine that the Bible is not the Word of God, although it contains Divine truth, but Divine truth mixed with human error; and that it is not an authoritative external rule either of faith or practice, except in so far as its contents commend themselves to the reason and conscience of men, or what is called 'the light within.' This comprehensive state-

ment includes several distinct particulars, and each of these must be separately considered.

The theory admits that the Bible contains a certain portion of 'Divine truth:' but in what sense? Is it Divine truth supernaturally revealed -a Divine message making known to man the mind and will of God for his salvation—a positive instruction, additional to the light of nature, and superior to it? Or is it Divine truth, not supernaturally revealed, but perceived or discovered by our natural faculties, and called divine for no other reason and in no other sense, than as all other truth may be said to be so on account of its being ultimately derived from Him who is 'the God of Truth?' We fear that the latter is the sense in which the expression must be understood; for, in any other, it would open the door for that 'irrational supernaturalism' of which Dr Williams speaks, and revelation could no longer 'be traced within the sphere of ' nature and humanity.' But if it be understood in this sense, it follows that the truth which is contained in Scripture, although it may be Divine, is not a whit more supernatural than the error with which it is there associated—that both alike are the mere products of man's natural faculties, quickened only into action by some purely subjective influence; and that, in point of authority, they stand precisely on the same level, so far as that depends at all on the sacred writings in which they are equally contained; in other words, they have no authority what-

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ever, except that which, in every other case, belongs to truth as compared with error. The Bible, therefore, as such, cannot be called in any peculiar sense, 'the Word of God.' It contains, indeed, Divine truth, but so does every other book—the 'Principia' of Newton, the dramas of Shakspere, the volume of 'Essays and Reviews'—in so far as they inculcate what can be shown to be true; but it does not contain any Divine truth supernaturally revealed, or any message from God making known to men what He requires them to believe and obey as an authoritative expression of His mind and will—it is Divine only as all other truth is Divine, and here, as everywhere else, Divine truth is mixed with human error.

That this is no exaggerated or overcharged description of the scheme of thought which is developed in this volume, is only too painfully evident from the following passages. We are taught, first of all, to distinguish between two things which are justly said to be widely different—between the Bible being the Word of God, and containing the Word of God. 'It has been matter of great boast,' says Mr Wilson, 'within the Church of England, in 'common with other Protestant Churches, that it is 'founded on the "Word of God," a phrase which begs many a question when applied to the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments. . In 'that which may be considered the pivot article of the 'Church, this expression ("the Word of God") does

ont occur, but only "Holy Scripture," "Canonical "Books," "Old and New Testaments," It contains no declaration of the Bible being throughout super-Insturally suggested, nor any intimation as to which ortions of it were owing to a special Divine illumiantion, nor the slightest attempt at defining in-\* spiration, whether mediate or immediate, whether through, or beside, or overruling the natural faculties of the subject of it: not the least hint of the relation between the Divine and human elements in the com-' position of the biblical books. . . The Word of God is contained in Scripture, whence it does not follow that it is co-extensive with it. The Church to which we belong does not put that stumbling-block before the feet of her members. It is their own fault if they put it there for themselves, authors of their 'own offence.' Still, it may be said, this writer acknowledges the 'Word of God' as contained at least in the Bible, although not co-extensive with it; and some, satisfied with the mere sound of the words, may never think of inquiring in what sense the orthodox phrase is used; they may overlook the fact that he carefully leaves open the whole question as to the natural or supernatural origin of this word -whether 'inspiration was mediate or immediate, 4 through, or beside, or overruling the natural faculties of the subject of it.' True, he speaks of a 'Divine' as well as a 'human' element in 'the 'composition of the biblical books;' but is not all truth Divine? and may not 'the Divine element'

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be that portion of truth which they happen to contain, just as the 'human element' is that portion of error with which it is combined in Scripture, while the former, no more than the latter, is held to have been supernaturally revealed? The one is Divine. simply because it is true; the other is human, simply because it is false; but in neither instance is there anything higher or better than the mere product of man's 'natural faculties.' In a certain sense, widely different from his, we recognise the presence both of a Divine and a human element in the Word of God:a Divine element in its truth supernaturally revealed as a message from God to man, and also in its inspiration, which extends, not only to its peculiar doctrines, but to its whole contents in whatever way they may have become known, and stamps them all with the impress of infallible authority; -and yet a human element, not implying fallibility or error, seeing that it was superintended and controlled by unerring wisdom, but human in these respects-that the natural faculties of the sacred writers were called into exercise as the recipients of Divine communication and the instruments of the Divine will-that human language was employed as the vehicle of Divine truth-that human experience and human faith find expression there, so as that the sacred writers are witnesses to us of what they saw and heard as men, and also examples to believers in all ages, in so far as they gave utterance to their personal feelings of penitence or trust, of peace, and

hope, and joy,—and thereby imparted, under the guidance of the Spirit of God, that deep human interest to their writings which could belong only to those of 'men of like passions with ourselves,' and which will find a responsive chord in the heart of every true believer till the end of time. In this sense we gratefully acknowledge the presence of a human, as well as of a Divine, element in Scripture, but not in the sense of there being a mixture of truth and error there.

But, if we are to believe the writers of this volume. a correct description of the Bible would exclude from its sacred contents all Divine truth supernaturally revealed, and admit a copious admixture of human 'If geology proves,' says Dr Temple, 'that we must not interpret the first chapters of Genesis 'literally; if historical investigations shall show us that inspiration, however it may protect the doctrine, yet was not empowered to protect the narrative of the inspired writers from occasional inac-'curacy . . . . the results should still be welcome.' Dr Williams speaks of 'the half ideal, half traditional 'notices of the beginnings of our race, compiled in 'Genesis;' and of the firmness with which Bunsen ' relegates the long line of the first patriarchs to the domain of legend or of symbolical cycle,' Wilson exhorts those 'who are able to do so,' to ' lead the less educated to distinguish between the different kinds of words which it (the Bible) contains—between the dark patches of human passion

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'and error which form a partial crust upon it, and 'the bright centre of spiritual truth within.' Mr Goodwin insists 'that the definition and idea of 'Divine revelation' must be modified, and 'the possibility of an admixture of error' allowed; and tells us that 'theologians persist in clinging to theories of 'God's procedure towards man which have long been 'seen to be untenable.'

The Bible being thus a mixture of truth and error, cannot of course be regarded as having any claim to be of itself an authoritative external rule either of faith or practice; it can only be of use, as any other book may be, in so far as it commends itself as true to the reason and conscience of men. or to the 'light within.' To what tests-rational, moral, scientific, and historical-its sacred contents must be subjected, to elicit the truth and eliminate the error that is combined with it, will afterwards appear; in the meantime we solicit the attention of our readers to the jealousy with which these writers regard any external authority in matters of religion. or any authority at least higher than the Bible-considered, not as 'the Word of God,'-but as 'an ex-' pression of devout reason,'-or as 'the voice of the 'congregation.' A 'misgiving as to the authority ' of the Scriptures' is described as a characteristic of those who patronise a 'negative theology;' and we are told, most truly, that 'when the Protestants 'threw off this authority (of the Church) they did 'not assign to reason what they took from the

'Church, but to Scripture;' that 'as long as this

could be kept to, the Protestant theory of belief was whole and sound,' but that 'time, learned controversy, and abatement of zeal drove the Protestants generally' from this ground and that 'every foot of ground that Scripture lost was gained by one or other of the three substitutes, Church authority, the spirit, or reason.' And as these writers are not prepared to acknowledge the authority either of Scripture or of the Church, every external rule or standard must be excluded, and they take refuge in reason, and spirit or conscience. which may be said to constitute together 'the light 'within.' After a time, says Dr Temple, 'the hu-'man race was left to itself to be guided by the ' teaching of the spirit within;' 'The faculty of faith has turned inwards, and cannot now accept any outer manifestations of the truth of God; 'The ' law in fact which God makes the standard of our conduct may have one of two forms; it may be an external law-a law which governs from the out-' side, compelling our will to bow even though our ' understanding be unconvinced and unenlightened -- saying you must, and making no effort to make you feel that you ought; appealing not to your conscience, but to force or fear, and caring little whether you willingly agree or reluctantly submit. Or, again, the law may be an internal law, a voice

which speaks within the conscience, and carries the understanding along with it—a law which is not

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'imposed on us by another power, but by our own enlightened will.' 'The spirit or conscience comes to full strength, and assumes the throne intended for him in the soul . . . He is the third great teacher and the last.' 'We use the Bible, not to over-ride, but to evoke the voice of conscience: . . . it wins from us all the reverence of a supreme authority, and yet imposes on us no yoke of subjection. This it does by virtue of the principle of private judgment, which puts conscience between us and the Bible, making conscience the supreme interpreter, whom it may be a duty to enlighten, but whom it can never be a duty to disobey.'

According to the principle of the Reformed Churches, 'the doctrines of men and private spirits,' not less than 'the decrees of councils and opinions ' of ancient writers,' are to be judged by the Holy. 'Spirit speaking in the Scriptures;' and on no other principle can there be any effectual safeguard against the wildest fanaticism in the Church. It is singular that grave and learned divines of the Church of England should seek to revive the doctrine of the 'light within,' which was so popular among the sectaries in the age of Cromwell, and which found its ablest advocate in Robert Barclay, the author of a celebrated 'Apology for the Doctrines of the People called Quakers.' His argument is at least as logical and his statement as scriptural, as those of Dr Temple, when he puts the case thus:

- From these revelations of the Spirit of God to the saints have proceeded the Scriptures of truth. ' which contain (1) a faithful historical account' of certain facts; (2) 'a prophetical account of several things; (3) a full and ample account of the doctrine of Christ. Nevertheless, because they are only a declaration of the fountain and not the ' fountain itself, therefore they are not to be esteemed the principal ground of all truth and know-' ledge, nor yet the adequate primary rule of faith and manners. Nevertheless, as that which giveth a true and faithful testimony of the first foundation, they are and may be esteemed a secondary rule, ' subordinate to the Spirit from which they have all their excellency and certainty.' Our only doubt is whether our new advocates of the 'inward light' might agree with Barclay in speaking so highly of the Scriptures. But how far they have departed from the principles of the Reformers must be evident to every one who considers how those noble champions of the truth contended for the sole authority of the Scriptures in opposition alike to the alleged infallibility of the Church and the presumptuous pretensions of 'private spirits;' how they represented ' the Spirit of God speaking in the Scriptures' as the supreme arbiter and judge in all controversies in matters of faith; and how they spoke, as Claude did in his Defence of the Reformation,'\* of the prophets and apostles as being still present to the Church in their

unchangeable writings, and ever living witnesses for 'the faith once delivered to the saints,' amidst all the caprices of individual error, and all the fluctuations of public opinion. It was to no 'light within' that they made their appeal in fighting the battles of the faith; but to that sun of truth which God has placed in the firmament of the Church, and by which reason and conscience itself should be enlightened and ruled.

If the Bible contains a mixture of truth and error. it follows that the reading of the Scriptures must be useless, or even dangerous, unless we are in possession of some criterion or test by which we may discriminate between what is true and false, and separate the pure ore from the dross with which it is combined. And this leads us to consider the fifth cardinal error of the system which is developed in the 'Essays and Reviews;' an error which consists in thinking that we may warrantably sit in judgment on the contents of Scripture, and determine what should be received and what should be rejected by the application of various tests-rational moral critical, scientific, and historical-which have all been employed in their turn to discredit one portion after another of 'the oracles of God,' until it would be difficult to say how much or how little is left that would be worth contending for. These various tests. although specifically different, may be reduced to two general heads—the subjective test, including

reason and conscience, and the external test, including criticism, science, and history.

The subjective test, which includes reason and conscience, is the fundamental principle of two kindred systems—the older form of Rationalism and the more recent form of Spiritualism. The doctrine which is common to both is, that man possesses in the faculties of his own mind, and may freely apply, an internal test which enables him to separate what is true from what is false in Scripture, and entitles him to receive the one while he rejects the other. The external test, again, which includes criticism. science, and history, is applied by those who seek to try the accuracy of Scripture either by collating different manuscripts, or by investigating the history of the text, or by comparing its statements with some other parts of our ascertained knowledge, such as have been acquired, for instance, by the modern discoveries of astronomy and geology, or by the improved methods of historical research introduced and exemplified by Niebuhr. By a more comprehensive generalisation all these topics may be reduced to one category, and the question, in its ultimate analysis, relates to the proper office and province of that faculty, whatever it be, by which we compare the different sources and departments of our knowledge with one another, and mark the agreement or disagreement between them. In discussing this general question, much confusion of thought, and not a few dangerous errors, have arisen.

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on both sides, from not distinguishing aright between the use and the abuse, the legitimate exercise and the palpable excesses, of that faculty-call it reason, or reflection, or the faculty of comparison or relations, or what you will—which is so employed. There is a right use and legitimate exercise of man's intellectual faculties with reference both to natural and revealed religion. It is perfectly competent, and not only lawful but incumbent on him as an intelligent being from whom God requires a reasonable service, to examine the evidences which He has provided for the express purpose of laying a solid foundation of faith and hope: to make use of all available means for the right interpretation of His Word, which He has Himself put into our hands with the injunction to 'scarch the Scriptures;' to collate one part of it with another, whether as it is rendered in our English version or as it exists in the best and purest copies of the original text; and to compare both its historical and doctrinal contents with all the facts of our ascertained knowledge,-with the genuine dictates of right reason, with the laws of our moral nature, and with the results of scientific or historical research. It is competent to do so, although in the case of multitudes it is neither possible nor necessary; and we have no sympathy with those who would interdict the free exercise of our faculties in these various departments of inquiry, and denounce, as Mr Pattison, in humble imitation of the 'Tracts for the Times,' has done, all study of the-

evidences, as if it amounted to Rationalism in the bad sense of the term. But if there be a legitimate use, there is also a flagrant abuse of reason in matters of faith: it may be difficult to discriminate between the two, or to draw a broad line of demarcation such as shall serve to mark the limits within which reason may be warrantably and safely exercised, and beyond which it ought to be checked or restrained; but practically the distinction is universally felt and acknowledged. If we may be guided in forming a clear conception of it by the practice of our soundest divines in discussing such questions as avowed rationalists have raised with reference to the contents of Scripture, we should be disposed to say that, speaking generally, they have never denied the competency of men to judge of anything in regard to which they had, or were capable of having, sufficient information, or the validity of their conclusions, excepting when it could be clearly shown that they rested on partial and insufficient evidence, or were erroneously deduced from the premises on which they depended. The two main objections which have been urged against the whole scheme of Rationalism are these: first, that it has pronounced judgment on some subjects which human reason is incompetent, on account either of its necessary limitation as being finite, or of the want of sufficient information, to determine; and secondly, that when it has pronounced judgment on some other subjects which belong to its proper province, it has judged erroneously, and adopted

conclusions which are not warranted by the facts of the case. Let any one examine the line of argument which is pursued by such profound thinkers as Butler, M'Laurin, and Inglis, in dealing with the presumptive objections of infidelity, and he will find that in every instance they have recourse, not to a sweeping denial of the competency of reason to judge when it is fully informed, or of the validity of its conclusions when they have been correctly deduced. but to one or other of these two replies. And there is, and ever will be, ample room for maintaining a warfare with Rationalism on these grounds. unless on the supposition that man is omniscient, there must always be some truth which is above reason, although it is not against it; and, unless on the supposition that man is infallible, there must always be a danger of his drawing erroneous conclusions even from the facts of his ascertained knowledge. And it is by showing that he is incompetent to judge of some things, and has judged erroneously of others, that our best divines have most successfully repelled the assaults of infidelity. When it has been objected, for instance, to the doctrine of the Trinity, that it is against reason as involving a flagrant selfcontradiction, the objection has been repelled, not by alleging that a self-contradictory proposition may be true, but by showing that there is no contradiction in the case, since the persons of the Godhead are not said to be one and three in the same sense, or eodem respectu. When it has been objected, again, to the doctrine

of original sin, that it is opposed to the dictates of conscience, which teach us to regard sin as a personal offence that cannot be imputed to others, or visited in their case with penal suffering—the objection has been repelled partly by showing that, for aught we know, there may be another besides a purely personal law-a generic constitution extending to the race at large, and imposed on one appointed to act as its representative; and partly by pointing to the undeniable fact of hereditary evil, arising from the solidarity of the race, which is so evident as to extort even from Dr Beecher the acknowledgment that the moral phenomena of the actual world are such as cannot be accounted for otherwise than on the supposition 'of a forfeiture ' prior to birth.' And so when the irregular distribution of good and evil in the present state has been urged as an objection against the reality of a moral government, it has been met by Butler with this conclusive reply, that what might be unsuitable to a state of final retribution may be perfectly consistent with a preparatory state of probation and trial, and that we are incompetent judges in such a case, since the great scheme is as yet only incompletely developed, and still more imperfectly understood.

Particular of Particular

Still, it may be said, reason is acknowledged as the supreme arbiter and judge in all such cases; and its sovereignty is practically acknowledged when its competency is admitted at all. And this is the

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'imposed on us by another power, but by our own enlightened will.' 'The spirit or conscience comes to full strength, and assumes the throne intended for him in the soul . . . He is the third great teacher and the last.' 'We use the Bible, not to over-ride, but to evoke the voice of conscience: . . . it wins from us all the reverence of a supreme authority, and yet imposes on us no yoke of subjection. This it does by virtue of the principle of private judgment, which puts conscience between us and the Bible, making conscience the supreme interpreter, whom it may be a duty to enlighten, but whom it can never be a duty to disobey.'

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Note I.

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fundamental fallacy of the whole scheme. It is assumed to be supreme, because its exercise is indispensable to the acquisition of knowledge. As well may the eye be said to be the lord of light. because both are essential to vision. Reason is a reflective faculty, but it reflects only on what it first receives-it is dependent on the senses for its earliest information from without, and, from first to last, has to deal with facts which are independent of its caprices, and which utterly disown its authority. And as this is the real state of the case with respect to our natural knowledge, we are not otherwise situated with respect to that which is spiritual. The volume of nature in the one case, the volume of revelation in the other, is the supreme rule, and the standard of ultimate appeal. Every theory in science must be brought to the test of nature, and every speculation in religion to the test of Scripture; and the mere exercise of reason, in either case, has no effect in changing the relation between reason and the rule of its judgment. When the work entitled ' Philosophia Scripture Interpres,' which is usually printed among those of Semler, first appeared, it was answered, among others, by John Wilson, of Catherine Hall, Cambridge, at a time when theology was really studied and understood at the universities, by distinguishing between the 'rule of interpretation' and 'the means which are many and various;' and by showing that however reason, with the aid of learning, science, and criticism, may be a means, it

cannot be the rule of interpretation, since, according to the received doctrine of all the Reformed Churches, 'Scripture is its own interpreter,' just as nature, and nature only, is the rule of science; and reason, with all the resources of telescopes, and crucibles, and other means, is merely the scholar who reads the lesson that is set before him—the minister who is compelled, at every step, to bend his own operation into compliance with inexorable laws, which he is able to decipher, but utterly powerless to modify or set aside.

Suppose one were to say, You concede the competency of reason to examine the evidence of revelation, and to compare one part of Scripture with another, as well as with the facts of history and science; you admit the right-you insist even on the duty, of private judgment in matters of faithare you entitled, then, to blame me on account of unbelief, if, in prosecuting, as I believe in a conscientious and candid spirit, the inquiries which you allow to be competent, I have arrived at a conclusion widely different from yours? We should answer, not by denying his right to inquire and decide for himself, for 'let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind, but by reminding him that, in the exercise of that right, he may have judged amiss, and cannot possibly have exhausted the whole evidence that has been placed before him, so as to be released from the duty of further inquiry-that his conclusion stands opposed to the

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whole array of proofs by which the authority of revelation was first established in the world, and by which it still sustains itself amidst all opposition; and that while his 'judgment' rests with Him who alone is 'Lord of the conscience,' we know enough from the experience of our own hearts to warrant us in saying that prejudice and passion often bias the mind in the treatment of evidence, and still more in the treatment of the truths of religion; and that He, 'who searches the heart,' and 'knows what is in ' man,' has taught His disciples that 'light has come ' into the world, but men have loved darkness rather 'than light.' Surely, if no man would rest his salvation on the spotless perfection of His character, it must be a fearful venture to peril all on the supposed sinlessness of unbelief; and, while he claims the right of free inquiry, he should remember that, in the exercise of private judgment, he is still subject to God as a moral and responsible agent, and that he will be judged according to the measure of light which has been vouchsafed to guide him to the knowledge and belief of the truth. Rationalism will be a precarious support and a miscrable refuge should revelation really be supernatural and divine; for then, even in the way of mere natural consequence, and apart from any positive penal infliction, he must forfeit all those privileges and hopes which are indissolubly connected with a true, heartfelt faith.

If we have succeeded in exposing the fundamental

errors of this system of doctrine, especially those which relate to the nature of revelation, and the record to which it has been consigned, we may dismiss with a more summary notice some other conclusions which can only be regarded as natural and inevitable consequences from its leading principles.

Among these we mark, first of all, a tendency to underrate the importance, and to disparage the study, of the evidences of Divine truth. Coleridge is quoted as having exclaimed, 'The evidences of 'Christianity! I am weary of the phrase;' and so many a one turns away even from the natural evidence for the being and perfections of God, as if we were not bound to study every manifestation by which God has made Himself known, whether through the medium of His works or His Word. In this respect the new school at Oxford bears a striking resemblance to that which preceded it, and the 'Essays and Reviews' have been largely indebted to the 'Tracts for the Times.' And it is not unnatural that they should have adopted the same disparaging tone in speaking of the Christian evidences; for if the older school wished to supersede the sole authority of Scripture as the rule of faith in favour of the distinctive principles of Romanism, the new school is equally concerned to set it aside in favour of the peculiar claims of Rationalism. Accordingly we are told that the evidences are not, ' like the essential doctrines of Christianity,' 'the 'same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever,' but

mere 'external accessories' of revelation: that 'faith ' and internal conviction, not historical facts, are the basis of religious belief; that negative theology ' distrusts the old proofs of a miraculous revelation:' that 'either faith has no existence, or must be ' reached in some other way than by "the trial of "the witnesses;"' and that, so far as the 'super-'natural' element is concerned, 'the evidential 'school has been an entire failure.' We are even informed that 'an age proving its creed shows it has ' lost faith in it;' perhaps ministers of the Church of England disproving its creed may be, according to the rule of contraries, not a symptom of unbelief. but rather the reverse of that! We need not wonder at this extreme jealousy of the Christian evidences, for without them we cannot establish the Divine commission of the apostles or the Divine authority of Scripture; and without an authoritative Bible there is no external rule or standard that can claim the submission of reason, or even the obedience of the life.

If the evidences be discarded, or at least disparaged, and if faith is still to be retained and cherished, it must either be utterly baseless, or it must be made to rest on some other ground—on some intuition of reason, or some feeling of the heart, or some instinct of the moral sense; and accordingly every effort is made to effect a divorce between reason and faith. Not content with saying that the study of the external evidences alone is inadequate to the production of

true spiritual and saving faith, belief is described as if it were independent alike of knowledge and of proof, and, as if it might be more certainly and more easily attained in some other way. Instead of considering the magnificent scheme of miracle, and prophecy, and type which God has expressly provided to establish and sustain the faith of His Church, the soul must soar aloft on the wings of 'contemplative and 'speculative' thought; and if this should seem to imply some exercise of reason, since we can scarcely be said to think or speculate without it, yet no one must imagine that anything like reasoning on evidence is involved in it; it is a transcendental reason, a direct intuition, higher than all experience, and independent of all proofs; for 'beyond the possible conceptions of intellect or knowledge there lies open the boundless region of spiritual things. 'which is the sole dominion of "faith;" and, thereforc, 'what is not a subject for a problem may hold 'its place in a creed.' 'Matters of clear and positive ' fact, investigated on critical grounds, and supported ' by exact evidence, are properly matters of know-' ledge, not of faith. It is rather in points of less definite character that any exercise of faith can take place; it is rather with matters of religious belief belonging to a higher and less conceivable class of truths, with the mysterious things of the unseen world, that faith holds a connection, and . 'more readily associates itself with spiritual ideas, ' than with external evidence.' This faith without

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evidence reminds us of what Kant said of speculation apart from experience: 'The light dove, whilst in ' its free flight it divides the air, whose resistance it ' feels, might entertain the supposition that it would 'succeed much better in airless space; so Plato 'abandoned the sensible world, because it set such ' narrow limits to the understanding, and hazarded ' himself beyond it upon the wings of ideas into the ' void space of the pure understanding. He did not ' mark that he made no way by his efforts-since he ' had no counter-pressure, as it were, for support, ' whereon he could rest, and whereby he could em-' ploy his power in order to make the understanding ' move onward.' It is well worthy of remark that some of the earliest opponents of Christianity made it a matter of charge against her ministers, that they left the truth to depend on faith and not on reason, and that this charge was indignantly repelled by the first Christian apologists. Among others, Eusebius distinctly refers to it in his 'Praparatio Evangelica' (Book I., c. 1); or in Seguier de Saint Brisson's French version (pp. 3, 6, 14),\* and replies in substance that Christians are not required to believe without evidence, but have solid grounds for their faith in those supernatural attestations by which the Gospel was established at the first, and especially in the manifest fulfilment of prophecy, facts passing before their eyes, by which it was still confirmed.

Akin to the distinction between reason and faith. but yet different from it, is that between fletter and 'spirit;' and this, when combined with the principle of 'ideological interpretation,' is more than sufficient to relieve us from the restraints of any external rule of faith, and to set aside all the supernatural facts, and all the peculiar doctrines, of revelation. neither the subjective nor the external tests formerly mentioned could complete the work of destructive criticism, their deficiency is amply supplied by a canon of interpretation which enables us to seize the spirit while we discard the letter, just as we can best reach the kernel by breaking the husk in which it is contained: and which entitles us to treat miracles as myths, while we may make the doctrinal statements of Scripture mere symbols of any idea which philosophy may invent, or a teeming fancy suggest. Professor Jowett declaims against mythical and typical interpretations, but 'ideology' will be more prolific of fanciful and far-fetched meanings than any principle which has ever yet obtained the sanction of educated men, or admission into the pulpits or professorial chairs of any Church in Christendom.

But what is to be said of the Church herself, her articles and creeds? Surely here, at least, we have a visible external authority—a society regularly constituted, placed under official governors, and subject to a code of laws for the express purpose of guarding the sacred deposit of Divine truth, and maintaining a 'godly discipline.' But what is the Church more

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than any other voluntary association, if there be no supernatural revelation? and what is her authority, if that of the Bible be set aside? Will her creeds or articles impose any obligation on the consciences of her members, or even of her office-bearers, if the words of inspired prophets and apostles have no such power? True, her office-bearers have subscribed these articles; but what then? May they not be understood in a non-natural sense, or subjected to the principle of 'ideological interpretation' as well as the Scriptures? These are confessedly the words of men; why should it be more difficult to deal with them than with the 'Word of God?'

The volume which we have thus reviewed suggests some reflections which may be briefly stated as a suitable sequel to the remarks which have been already offered. It contains nothing remarkable in point of ability, or learning, or even of novelty. Compared with the writings of Lord Herbert, Anthony Collins, and other freethinkers of a former age, the 'Essays and Reviews' are immeasurably less likely to leave a permanent impression on the public mind; they are not superior, if they can be said to be equal, to some of the pieces which appeared in Chapman's 'Catholic Series.' What, then, is the secret of the wide-spread and almost unprecedented sensation which they have unquestionably excited in the English mind? We believe it to be due almost entirely to the position and profession of the writers as

of original sin, that it is opposed to the dictates of conscience, which teach us to regard sin as a personal offence that cannot be imputed to others, or visited in their case with penal suffering-the objection has been repelled partly by showing that, for aught we know, there may be another besides a purely personal law-a generic constitution extending to the race at large, and imposed on one appointed to act as its representative; and partly by pointing to the undeniable fact of hereditary evil, arising from the solidarity of the race, which is so evident as to extort even from Dr Beecher the acknowledgment that the moral phenomena of the actual world are such as cannot be accounted for otherwise than on the supposition 'of a forfeiture ' prior to birth.' And so when the irregular distribution of good and evil in the present state has been urged as an objection against the reality of a moral government, it has been met by Butler with this conclusive reply, that what might be unsuitable to a state of final retribution may be perfectly consistent with a preparatory state of probation and trial, and that we are incompetent judges in such a case, since the great scheme is as yet only incompletely developed, and still more imperfectly understood.

Still, it may be said, reason is acknowledged as the supreme arbiter and judge in all such cases; and its sovereignty is practically acknowledged when its competency is admitted at all. And this is the

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the force of their reasonings; but much may arise from the sceptical spirit which pervades the volume. and the almost imperceptible influence which it may exert in sapping the faith of young and inexperienced minds. One of its worst effects will probably be to generate a feeling of distrust in regard to the supernatural element of revelation, and a latent but influential prejudice against the more peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, such as may, if left uncounteracted, prevent many from considering the claims of Scripture at all. For this reason we would strongly recommend the profound and able treatises of Mr M'Laurin and Dr Inglis on 'Prejudices against the ' Gospel,' which have been recently reprinted in one little tract, and which are admirably fitted to produce an impression on the minds of young men who are not unwilling to think as well as to read. Much as we deplore the appearance of the 'Essays and 'Reviews,' we see no reason for apprehension or alarm, unless the same method of teaching is to be still perpetuated in the Church and Universities. The evil that is done through the press can be counteracted also through the press; but when error is instilled into the minds of men in the pulpit or the lecture-room, the remedy must be sought for within the Church itself. We cannot doubt that, like every other controversy in the past history of the Church, the present agitation will be overruled

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for good; and that He who can bring 'light out ' of darkness, and order out of confusion,' will, in His own good time and way, make it redound to His own glory, and to the establishment of that blessed Word which 'He has magnified above all His name.'

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unchangeable writings, and ever living witnesses for 'the faith once delivered to the saints,' amidst all the caprices of individual error, and all the fluctuations of public opinion. It was to no 'light within' that they made their appeal in fighting the battles of the faith; but to that sun of truth which God has placed in the firmament of the Church, and by which reason and conscience itself should be enlightened and ruled.

If the Bible contains a mixture of truth and error. it follows that the reading of the Scriptures must be useless, or even dangerous, unless we are in possession of some criterion or test by which we may discriminate between what is true and false, and separate the pure ore from the dross with which it is combined. And this leads us to consider the fifth cardinal error of the system which is developed in the 'Essays and Reviews;' an error which consists in thinking that we may warrantably sit in judgment on the contents of Scripture, and determine what should be received and what should be rejected by the application of various tests-rational, moral, critical, scientific, and historical-which have all been employed in their turn to discredit one portion after another of 'the oracles of God,' until it would be difficult to say how much or how little is left that would be worth contending for. These various tests. although specifically different, may be reduced to two general heads—the subjective test, including

reason and conscience, and the external test, including criticism, science, and history.

The subjective test, which includes reason and conscience, is the fundamental principle of two kindred systems-the older form of Rationalism and the more recent form of Spiritualism. The doctrine which is common to both is, that man possesses in the faculties of his own mind, and may freely apply, an internal test which enables him to separate what is true from what is false in Scripture, and entitles him to receive the one while he rejects the other. The external test, again, which includes criticism, science, and history, is applied by those who seek to try the accuracy of Scripture either by collating different manuscripts, or by investigating the history of the text, or by comparing its statements with some other parts of our ascertained knowledge, such as have been acquired, for instance, by the modern discoveries of astronomy and geology, or by the improved methods of historical research introduced and exemplified by Niebuhr. By a more comprehensive generalisation all these topics may be reduced to one category, and the question, in its ultimate analysis, relates to the proper office and province of that faculty, whatever it be, by which we compare the different sources and departments of our knowledge with one another, and mark the agreement or disagreement between them. In discussing this general question, much confusion of thought, and not a few dangerous errors, have arisen,



evidences, as if it amounted to Rationalism in the bad sense of the term. But if there be a legitimate use, there is also a flagrant abuse of reason in matters of faith: it may be difficult to discriminate between the two, or to draw a broad line of demarcation such as shall serve to mark the limits within which reason may be warrantably and safely exercised, and beyond which it ought to be checked or restrained; but practically the distinction is universally felt and acknowledged. If we may be guided in forming a clear conception of it by the practice of our soundest divines in discussing such questions as avowed rationalists have raised with reference to the contents of Scripture, we should be disposed to say that, speaking generally, they have never denied the competency of men to judge of anything in regard to which they had, or were capable of having, sufficient information, or the validity of their conclusions, excepting when it could be clearly shown that they rested on partial and insufficient evidence, or were erroneously deduced from the premises on which they depended. The two main objections which have been urged against the whole scheme of Rationalism are these: first, that it has pronounced judgment on some subjects which human reason is incompetent, on account either of its necessary limitation as being finite, or of the want of sufficient information, to determine; and secondly, that when it has pronounced judgment on some other subjects which belong to its proper province, it has judged erroneously, and adopted

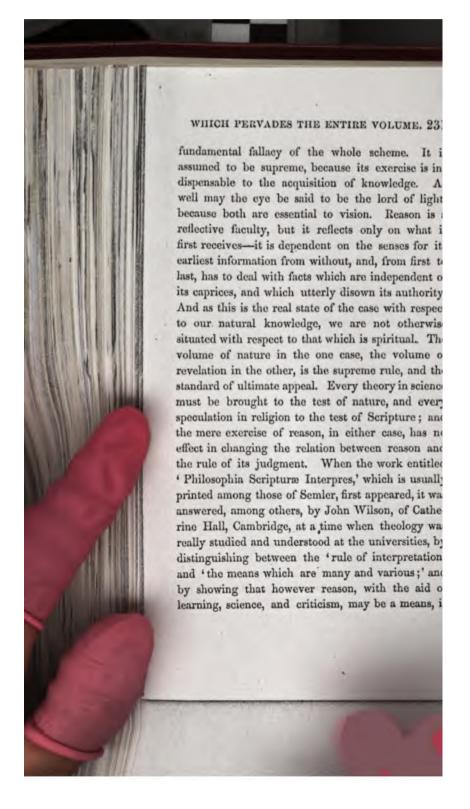
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conclusions which are not warranted by the facts of the case. Let any one examine the line of argument which is pursued by such profound thinkers as Butler, M'Laurin, and Inglis, in dealing with the presumptive objections of infidelity, and he will find that in every instance they have recourse, not to a sweeping denial of the competency of reason to judge when it is fully informed, or of the validity of its conclusions when they have been correctly deduced. but to one or other of these two replies. And there is, and ever will be, ample room for maintaining a warfare with Rationalism on these grounds. unless on the supposition that man is omniscient, there must always be some truth which is above reason, although it is not against it; and, unless on the supposition that man is infallible, there must always be a danger of his drawing erroneous conclusions even from the facts of his ascertained knowledge. And it is by showing that he is incompetent to judge of some things, and has judged erroneously of others, that our best divines have most successfully repelled the assaults of infidelity. When it has been objected, for instance, to the doctrine of the Trinity, that it is against reason as involving a flagrant selfcontradiction, the objection has been repelled, not by alleging that a self-contradictory proposition may be true, but by showing that there is no contradiction in the case, since the persons of the Godhead are not said to be one and three in the same sense, or codem respectu. When it has been objected, again, to the doctrine

of original sin, that it is opposed to the dictates of conscience, which teach us to regard sin as a personal offence that cannot be imputed to others, or visited in their case with penal suffering—the obicction has been repelled partly by showing that, for aught we know, there may be another besides a purely personal law-a generic constitution extending to the race at large, and imposed on one appointed to act as its representative; and partly by pointing to the undeniable fact of hereditary evil. arising from the solidarity of the race, which is so evident as to extort even from Dr Beecher the acknowledgment that the moral phenomena of the actual world are such as cannot be accounted for otherwise than on the supposition 'of a forfeiture ' prior to birth.' And so when the irregular distribution of good and evil in the present state has been urged as an objection against the reality of a moral government, it has been met by Butler with this conclusive reply, that what might be unsuitable to a state of final retribution may be perfectly consistent with a preparatory state of probation and trial, and that we are incompetent judges in such a case, since the great scheme is as yet only incompletely developed, and still more imperfectly understood.

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Still, it may be said, reason is acknowledged as the supreme arbiter and judge in all such cases; and its sovereignty is practically acknowledged when its competency is admitted at all. And this is the



cannot be the rule of interpretation, since, according to the received doctrine of all the Reformed Churches, 'Scripture is its own interpreter,' just as nature, and nature only, is the rule of science; and reason, with all the resources of telescopes, and crucibles, and other means, is merely the scholar who reads the lesson that is set before him—the minister who is compelled, at every step, to bend his own operation into compliance with inexorable laws, which he is able to decipher, but utterly powerless to modify or set aside.

Suppose one were to say, You concede the competency of reason to examine the evidence of revelation, and to compare one part of Scripture with another, as well as with the facts of history and science; you admit the right-you insist even on the duty, of private judgment in matters of faithare you entitled, then, to blame me on account of unbelief, if, in prosecuting, as I believe in a conscientious and candid spirit, the inquiries which you allow to be competent, I have arrived at a conclusion widely different from yours? We should answer, not by denying his right to inquire and decide for himself, for 'let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind, but by reminding him that, in the exercise of that right, he may have judged amiss, and cannot possibly have exhausted the whole evidence that has been placed before him, so as to be released from the duty of further inquiry-that his conclusion stands opposed to the

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whole array of proofs by which the authority of revelation was first established in the world, and by which it still sustains itself amidst all opposition : and that while his 'judgment' rests with Him who alone is 'Lord of the conscience,' we know enough from the experience of our own hearts to warrant us in saying that prejudice and passion often bias the mind in the treatment of evidence, and still more in the treatment of the truths of religion; and that He, 'who searches the heart,' and 'knows what is in ' man,' has taught His disciples that 'light has come ' into the world, but men have loved darkness rather 'than light.' Surely, if no man would rest his salvation on the spotless perfection of His character, it must be a fearful venture to peril all on the supposed sinlessness of unbelief; and, while he claims the right of free inquiry, he should remember that, in the exercise of private judgment, he is still subject to God as a moral and responsible agent, and that he will be judged according to the measure of light which has been vouchsafed to guide him to the knowledge and belief of the truth. Rationalism will be a precarious support and a miserable refuge should revelation really be supernatural and divine; for then, even in the way of mere natural consequence, and apart from any positive penal infliction, he must forfeit all those privileges and hopes which are indissolubly connected with a true, heartfelt faith.

If we have succeeded in exposing the fundamental

errors of this system of doctrine, especially those which relate to the nature of revelation, and the record to which it has been consigned, we may dismiss with a more summary notice some other conclusions which can only be regarded as natural and inevitable consequences from its leading principles.

Among these we mark, first of all, a tendency to underrate the importance, and to disparage the study, of the evidences of Divine truth. Coleridge is quoted as having exclaimed, 'The evidences of 'Christianity! I am weary of the phrase;' and so many a one turns away even from the natural evidence for the being and perfections of God, as if we were not bound to study every manifestation by which God has made Himself known, whether through the medium of His works or His Word. In this respect the new school at Oxford bears a striking resemblance to that which preceded it, and the 'Essays and Reviews' have been largely indebted to the 'Tracts for the Times.' And it is not unnatural that they should have adopted the same disparaging tone in speaking of the Christian evidences; for if the older school wished to supersede the sole authority of Scripture as the rule of faith in favour of the distinctive principles of Romanism, the new school is equally concerned to set it aside in favour of the peculiar claims of Rationalism. Accordingly we are told that the evidences are not, 'like the essential doctrines of Christianity,' 'the 'same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever,' but

mere 'external accessories' of revelation: that 'faith ' and internal conviction, not historical facts, are the basis of religious belief; that negative theology ' distrusts the old proofs of a miraculous revelation;' that 'either faith has no existence, or must be ' reached in some other way than by "the trial of "the witnesses;"' and that, so far as the 'super-'natural' element is concerned, 'the evidential 'school has been an entire failure.' We are even informed that 'an age proving its creed shows it has 'lost faith in it;' perhaps ministers of the Church of England disproving its creed may be, according to the rule of contraries, not a symptom of unbelief. but rather the reverse of that! We need not wonder at this extreme jealousy of the Christian evidences, for without them we cannot establish the Divine commission of the apostles or the Divine authority of Scripture; and without an authoritative Bible there is no external rule or standard that can claim the submission of reason, or even the obedience of the life.

If the evidences be discarded, or at least disparaged, and if faith is still to be retained and cherished, it must either be utterly baseless, or it must be made to rest on some other ground—on some intuition of reason, or some feeling of the heart, or some instinct of the moral sense; and accordingly every effort is made to effect a divorce between reason and faith. Not content with saying that the study of the external evidences alone is inadequate to the production of

true spiritual and saving faith, belief is described as if it were independent alike of knowledge and of proof. and, as if it might be more certainly and more easily attained in some other way. Instead of considering the magnificent scheme of miracle, and prophecy. and type which God has expressly provided to establish and sustain the faith of His Church, the soul must soar aloft on the wings of 'contemplative and speculative' thought; and if this should seem to imply some exercise of reason, since we can scarcely be said to think or speculate without it, yet no one must imagine that anything like reasoning on evidence is involved in it; it is a transcendental reason. a direct intuition, higher than all experience, and independent of all proofs; for 'beyond the possible conceptions of intellect or knowledge there lies open the boundless region of spiritual things. ' which is the sole dominion of "faith;" and, thereforc, 'what is not a subject for a problem may hold 'its place in a creed.' 'Matters of clear and positive ' fact, investigated on critical grounds, and supported by exact evidence, are properly matters of know-' ledge, not of faith. It is rather in points of less definite character that any exercise of faith can take place; it is rather with matters of religious belief belonging to a higher and less conceivable ' class of truths, with the mysterious things of the unseen world, that faith holds a connection, and 'more readily associates itself with spiritual ideas, than with external evidence.' This faith without

Akin to the distinction between reason and faith. but yet different from it, is that between i letter and 'spirit;' and this, when combined with the principle of 'ideological interpretation,' is more than sufficient to relieve us from the restraints of any external rule of faith, and to set aside all the supernatural facts, and all the peculiar doctrines, of revelation. neither the subjective nor the external tests formerly mentioned could complete the work of destructive criticism, their deficiency is amply supplied by a canon of interpretation which enables us to seize the spirit while we discard the letter, just as we can best reach the kernel by breaking the husk in which it is contained; and which entitles us to treat miracles as myths, while we may make the doctrinal statements of Scripture mere symbols of any idea which philosophy may invent, or a teeming fancy suggest. Professor Jowett declaims against mythical and typical interpretations, but 'ideology' will be more prolific of fanciful and far-fetched meanings than any principle which has ever yet obtained the sanction of educated men, or admission into the pulpits or professorial chairs of any Church in Christendom.

But what is to be said of the Church herself, her articles and creeds? Surely here, at least, we have a visible external authority—a society regularly constituted, placed under official governors, and subject to a code of laws for the express purpose of guarding the sacred deposit of Divine truth, and maintaining a 'godly discipline.' But what is the Church more

members, and, for the most part, ministers and professors, in connection with the Church of England. The appearance of such a work from such a quarter has been generally, and, we think, justly regarded, as a significant indication that the movement, which commenced at Oxford nearly thirty years ago, has not yet spent its force, and as an ominous sign of the times, portending still further change.

Otherwise there is nothing formidable in this fresh assault on the bulwarks of our faith. creed of Christendom, which has survived the attacks of Celsus and Porphyry in early times, and the more recent outbreaks of French, and German, and English infidelity, is not likely to fall before Dr Temple's fanciful theory of the 'Education of the World;' or Dr Williams's denunciation of Predictive Prophecy; or Professor Powell's Inductive Presumption against Miracles; or Mr Wilson's Principle of Ideological Interpretation; or Professor Jowett's Method of fixing the Meaning of Inspiration. The whole volume is a mere eclectic compilation of the most heterogeneous and incongruous elements, derived from different sources-from the Deistical writers of the last century, from the older Rationalists and the more recent Spiritualists, from the Neologians of Germany, both the effete school of Paulus and the antagonist school of Strauss, all jumbled together, as if from such conflicting elements a self-consistent scheme could be formed. Little danger need be apprehended from the weight of their learning or

for good; and that He who can bring 'light out 'of darkness, and order out of confusion,' will, in His own good time and way, make it redound to His own glory, and to the establishment of that blessed Word which 'He has magnified above all His name.'

tween the power to perceive and know within, and the objective truth presented to it from without; and the seclusion of the mind from the influences of this external teaching, would leave its powers shut up in the germ. and its consciousness no better than a blank. seems undoubtedly to be the law of man's development, both as to his perception of the visible world and his knowledge of the intellectual. The power of perception would remain for ever dormant; and the eye, as its organ, would be without vision, unless an outward world. by the presentation to it of its sensible objects, awakened the capacity to life and exercise; and, in like manner, the mind itself would remain a tabula rasa, with all its noble faculties wrapped in alumber, and its opulence of thought unknown, unless the external conditions of knowledge necessary to develop it were present, and became its teacher from without. And the same conditions that are necessary to the acquisition of ideas, whether in the sensible or in the intellectual world, are no less necessary to the apprehension of truth of a moral and spiritual kind. An outward teaching of spiritual truth would never, indeed, lodge the apprehension of it in the understanding and heart, unless there were previously existing there the innate capacities for apprehending it; but it is no less certain, that the powers of thinking and feeling within, would of themselves never conduct to truth, unless there were the outward teaching, which is an indispensable condition for their exercise and development.

'The analogies, then, of all God's methods of educating the human mind in natural truth, clearly point to the employment of an outward teaching in combination with

an inward capacity of learning, in the education of man in spiritual things. These methods are uniformly based on the fundamental antithesis between the subjective susceptibilities of knowledge within, and the objective realities of knowledge external to the mind; and the one is no less necessary to the result than the other. It would, therefore, have been to traverse all the analogies of the past in regard to the education of both the individual and the race in natural knowledge, if supernatural knowledge had been communicated in any other shape than as an outward presentation of truth to the capacities for truth waiting to receive it within. The two theologies of Nature and Revelation are both taught in this way. The outward creation, with the impress upon it of God's wisdom, power, and goodness, addresses itself to the religious faculty even of those who have no other teaching, but who, under this appeal from without, have that faculty awakened to know something, however imperfectly, of His eternal power and Godhead. And the volume of a supernatural revelation, with its mysteries of Divine thought and reality far beyond what creation embodies, is an appeal also from without which awakens to the apprehension of its Divine truth the capacities of spiritual knowledge and faith which, without such appeal, had remained useless and undeveloped. So far is it, then, from being true, that our subjection to the influences of an external revelation is not adapted to man's condition and wants,—that it is perhaps the only method of teaching by which the capacities of faith and spiritual discernment within could have been really developed or perfectly taught. At all events, it is certain, that a revelation of Divine wisdom, embodied in human

speech, is not only admirably adapted for the purpose of the religious instruction and spiritual training of man in Divine truth, but it is the only method in strict analogy with those processes by which other truth is communicated.'—North British Review, No. lxv., p. 238.

#### NOTE B.

WE have elsewhere observed, that 'the legitimate application of induction is widely different from this sort of abstract metaphysical generalisation. On the ground of experience and inductive analogy, we may warrantably affirm the general constancy of nature, and the regular operation, in ordinary circumstances, of natural laws,a doctrine which, so far from being inconsistent with the truth of miracles, is necessarily implied in the recognition of them, as exceptional or extraordinary occurrences. We may even, on the same ground, admit, in regard to many natural events whose causes are as yet unknown, that they may all be ultimately reduced to regular laws, and connected with the order of the general system of nature; and, still further, that in speculating on the changes which have occurred on the earth in past times, we should seek for their explanation, in the first instance, in those causes which are still known to be in operation, and refrain from having recourse to other agencies, until these causes have been exhausted and found inadequate to account for the phenomena. But neither experience nor inductive analogy can afford any warrant for maintaining the invariable or immutable constancy of nature, so as to exclude the possibility.

cither of extensive changes in the constitution of the world and its inhabitants at successive epochs in its history, or of the occasional occurrence of extraordinary and exceptional events at variance with the usual course of nature, even when no extensive or permanent changes occurred in its established constitution: far less can they warrant us in ascribing the permanent changes in the one case, or the exceptional occurrences in the other, to the operation of mere physical causes. Were no other causes than such as are physical, known to us, we should be utterly unable to account for this class of events at all, since neither experience nor analogy could afford any key for their explanation. Yet, that great changes have occurred in the state of the world in past ages, involving the extinction of old and the introduction of new species, both of plants and animals, and that special events of a miraculous kind have been historically recorded and actually believed, are facts which can neither be doubted nor denied. The only question is, How are they to be accounted for? The existence of God being admitted, most men will believe with Paley that "miracles are not impossible;" and that the great primary miracle of Creation is sufficient to make any other miracle credible which He may be pleased to perform,—for creation and miracles are strictly analogous. But to affirm that "the order of nature" is "constant, . invariable, and immutable,"-that there never have been, and nover can be, either any permanent changes in its arrangements, or any special events at variance with its usual course, and that all such periodic changes or exceptional occurrences, must be ascribed only to physical causes, is to make Nature independent of the will of

God, and to exempt it from His providential government and control. And to represent these arbitrary and groundless conclusions as the results of inductive science, when they are at direct variance with facts attested, in the one case, by the strongest physical, in the other, by the strongest historical, evidence, and when there is no natural analogy which can be appealed to in support of them, is to betray a lamentable ignorance of the real

nature, and a reckless disregard of the necessary limits, of

scientific induction.'-North British Review, No. lxii., р. 360. Dr Thomas Brown expresses his views on this subject in the following terms :- ". What the holiest views of God and the universe require us to believe is . . . that He whose will was the source of all the qualities which created things display, may, if it seem good to Him, suspend, or variously modify, the qualities which Himself had given, or be, in any other way, the direct operator of extraordinary changes. We know God, as a Creator, in the things which are really existing, that mark, in the harmony of their mutual agencies, however varied they may seem to be, a general purpose, and therefore a contriver; and we believe in God, as the providential Governor of the world,—that is to say, we believe that the world, which He has so richly endowed, and the living beings, for whose use He seems so richly to have endowed it, cannot be indifferent to Him who made that magnificent provision, but must, on the contrary, be a continued object of His benevolent contemplation. And, therefore, since all things are subject to His will, and no greater power seems necessary to suspend any tendency of Nature than what originally pro-

duced it,-if there should be circumstances in which it would be of greater advantage, upon the whole, that the ordinary tendency should not continue, we see no reason. à priori, for disbelieving that a difference of event may be directly produced by Him, in those rare cases in which the temporary deviation would be for the same gracious end as that which fixed the general regularity.' - The possibility of the occasional direct operation of the power which formed the world, in varying the usual course of its events, it would be in the highest degree unphilosophical to deny; nor can we presume to estimate the degree of its probability, since, in many cases, of the wide bearing of which, on human happiness, we must be ignorant, it might be the result of the same benevolent motives which we must suppose to have influenced the Divine mind in the original act of Creation itself. . . . The will of the Deity, whether displayed in those obvious variations of events which are termed miracles, or inferred from those supposed secret and invisible changes which are ascribed to His providence, is itself, in all such cases, to be regarded by the affirmer of it as a new physical antecedent, from which, if it really form a part of the series of events, a difference of result may naturally be expected. . . . The laws of Nature (causasion?), surely are not violated, when a new antecedent is followed by a new consequent; they are violated only when the antecedent being exactly the same, a different consequent is the result.'- Essay on Cause and Effect, pp. 82, 394, 396.

#### NOTE C.

It is not with reference to miracles only, but to all facts of whatever kind, that Archbishop Whately's doctrine respecting testimony, is worthy of careful study. Of signs, there are some which, from a certain effect or phenomenon, infer the 'cause' of it; and others which, in like manner, infer some 'condition' which is not the ' cause.' Of these last, one species is the argument from testimony: the premiss being the existence of the testimony, the conclusion the truth of what is attested; -which is considered as a 'condition' of the testimony having been given: since it is evident that, so far only as this is allowed (i.e., so far only as it is allowed that the testimony would not have been given had it not been true), can this argument have any force. Testimony is of various kinds; and may possess various degrees of force, not only in reference to its own intrinsic character, but in reference also to the kind of conclusion that it is brought to support.' Locke says-'In the testimony of others is to be considered-1, The number; 2, The integrity; 3, The skill of the witnesses; 4, The design of the author, where it is a testimony out of a book cited; 5, The consistency of the parts and circumstances of the relation; 6, Contrary testimonies.' The mere fact that all these circumstances must be taken into account in estimating the value of testimony, is sufficient to show that it is regarded simply as a phenomenon whose existence is to be accounted for, and that its truth is only inferred when it can be shown that such testimony 'would not have been given, had it not been true.' -Whately's Rhetoric, B. i., P. i., c. 2, §§ 4.

PRINCIPAL CAMPBELL contended, as is well known, for 'an instinctive belief in testimony;' but he admits that, if it be not founded on experience, it is at least regulated by it. And this seems to involve the principle, that testimony is viewed simply as a phenomenon to be accounted for. 'From experience, we learn to confine our belief in human testimony within the proper bounds. Hence we are taught to consider many attendant circumstances, which serve either to corroborate or to invalidate its evidence. The reputation of the attesterhis manner of address—the nature of the fact attested the occasion of giving the testimony—the possible or probable design in giving it—the disposition of the hearers to whom it was given-and several other circumstances, have all considerable influence in fixing the degree of credibility.'-Dr Campbell's Phetoric, B. i., c. 5.

#### NOTE D.

ATHANASE COQUEREL, in presenting to the public 'the first complete system of Protestant dogmatics published in France by a pastor of the French Established Church, since the revocation of the Edict of Nantz,' proposed to offer 'a complete exposition of the Christian faith, expounded according to the spirit of the age'—but still 'resting on the Bible as a positive and direct revelation of the Spirit of God to the spirit of man.' In doing so, he takes occasion to explain and vindicate the abolition of subscription to articles of faith in the Protestant Church of France. 'In our days, the tenets of the Reformed Church of France can only be found, and are

THE CAN PERSON SERVICES AND THE PERSON SERVICES

written only, in the minds of its ministers -of its elders -of its members.' 'My object is to explain how a regular minister of the Reformed Church of France has a full right to compose and publish a treatise of Christian faith at variance with the Forty articles of our old Synods, without being bound in honour to send in his demission.' After stating his opposition to 'any other standard of faith but the Word of God,' he adds, that 'the only cause of his not entering the service of the Church of England,' was his unwillingness to sign the Thirty-nine articles,similar as they were to those of his own Synods. He explains, that when Christian worship was restored in France, the law of Germinal, which 'conferred civil liberty on the Protestant communities, and regulated their organisation,' was 'silent as to the obligation of signing the articles in order to enter the ministry,' and did not restore 'the national Synod, the only body which had a right to draw up articles of faith,' so that the creed became obsolete, and 'not a single minister since the year 1802 has been, or could be, called upon to sign' them. M. Coquerel rejoices in this change; and speaks with evident satisfaction of 'the preservation of the ancient creeds, simply as venerable records of the science and piety of their fathers, and of the enjoyment of a full freedom of examination and of faith.' Of the effect of this change we are scarcely qualified to judge; nor how far his statement is borne out by facts, when speaking of the 500 ministers of his Church, he says, -what certainly we could not now say of the Church of England, - ' I am confident that not one of us can be justly called a Rationalist in its genuine German sense,—there is not one of us who do not consider the Scriptures as a positive revelation.' But

we have our misgivings in regard to the tendencies of religious thought under the new system, when we read his own anticipations as to the future, and especially of 'the gradual emancipation of Christianity,'—its emancipation from discipline,—its emancipation from a clerical hierarchy,—its emancipation from authority,—its emancipation from forms,—its emancipation from the letter of Scripture, and its emancipation from Dogmas.—Christianity, translated by Davidson, 1847.

# Note E.

DR CHALMERS, speaking of a far more important question, offers some excellent remarks on 'unresolved difficulties,' and the use of 'hypothetical solutions,' in theology.

'There is many a conceivable topic of human thought regarding which there is an utter want of evidence either on the one side or on the other—in which case, if it do not help, neither should it hinder our conviction upon other topics that are shone upon by evidence, and which lie accessible to human inquiry. A thing may be far removed from us in ulterior darkness, like a body in the heavens, beyond the range of our telescopes. In virtue of its situation, we can attain to no positive knowledge of it. But it ought to be well remembered too, that in virtue of this very situation, it stands disarmed of all power to disturb our conclusions respecting the things which are near to us, and within the confines of observation.' 'The argumentum ab ignorantia, when rightly applied, is a preservative from an infinity of

errors in all the branches of human speculation. There is a little clause, very often employed by Butler in his reasonings—and, when opportunely brought in, it is of inestimable value both in theology and in science—' for aught we know.'

'An hypothesis may subserve a great logical purpose in theology, . . . it may be of force to nullify all the objections, and so to leave in their undiminished strength all those affirmative proofs on which the system of theology is based.' 'The defenders of the cause may not be able to offer a positive solution of the difficulty; yet of the multitude (of possible solutions), if there be but one likely, or even one that cannot be disproved, this is enough to relieve the cause of that discredit which antagonists would lay upon it.' 'In this state, we cannot say of the thing conjectured, that we know it to be true. -but we can say, that 'for aught we know,' it may be This is not enough for the establishment of a dogma. But it is enough for the displacing of an objection.-Works, vol. ii., p. 279, 306; see also Institutes, i. 120.

## NOTE F.

THERE is a Rationalism in science as well as in theology, and the one may serve to throw much light on the other. For this reason we solicit attention to the account which Degerando has given of the various systems of Rationalism in philosophy. In these systems, Reason is opposed to the authority of nature and experience, just as in some religious systems Reason is opposed to the authority of revelation. In enumerating the erroneous methods, or

rather the partial and defective forms of philosophy, Degerando mentions these six, -- Dogmatism, Rationalism, Materialism, Idealism, Scepticism, and Empiricism-and contrasts them respectively with what he calls the Philosophy of Experience, which receives that element of truth which belongs to each of these systems, while it eliminates the error with which it was blended. Rationalism in science is thus characterized as the rival of experience. unwilling to bow before the authority of Fact, and striving to assert its independent rights-' Deux puissantes rivales se disputent ou paraissent se disputer l'empire des connoissances humaines ; l'Expérience et la Raison. Plusièurs les croient opposées dans leurs prétentions, et se prononcent pour l'une des deux en proscrivant l'autre. . . On a donné le nom d'Empirisme a ce système qui, se concentrant exclusivement dans les impressions sensibles, refuse aux données de l'expérience le secours des vérités spèculatives. On pourrait donner le nom de Rationalisme au système qui, se fixant au contraire, d'une manière exclusive dans les déductions abstraites, rejette loin de lui tous les élémens empruntés des sens. L'Empirisme et le Rationalisme partent tous deux d'une supposition commune.—l'incompatiblité de deux principes de nos cinnoissances, fondés l'un sur les sens et l'autre sur la raison.' He then shows that Reason must receive all its data from without,—that the source and the rule of truth lie elsewhere than in the mind itself,-and that absolute Rationalism, if consistent, must issue in utter scepticism.—Histoire Comparée des Systémes, ii. 360, etc.

Bartholmess marks the same contrast between Empiricism and Rationalism; and applying the distinction

to theology, shows that religion may be reasonable, without being rationalistic.—Histoire Critique des Doctrines Religieuses de la Philosophie Moderne, ii. 110, 297.

The fact that Rationalism asserted its claims in science as well as in Theology, and that, in the former, it was effectually refuted by Bacon, when he established his fundamental Aphorism, that man is merely 'the interpreter of nature,' needs only to be clearly apprehended to teach us the great lesson, that man is also the mere interpreter of Scripture, and that God's revelation, not man's reason, is the rule of faith.

#### NOTE G.

THE statement in the text is made with a certain qualification, which is necessary to guard against an erroneous inference from it. For human science must never be placed on the same level, in point of authority, with the inspired Word of God. Had there been only a Revelation of Divine truth to the minds of Prophets and Apostles, without any effectual provision for insuring its being conveyed by them in its integrity and purity to the minds of others, and transmitted in their writings to future times, there might have been less difference between the two cases—as Scripture would then have been a human and fallible account of God's revealed truth, just as science is a human and fallible exposition of the volume of nature. But inspiration secures the infallibility of the record, and thus preserves the authority of the truth revealed. And, for this reason, our divines have been careful to mark the difference, in point of authority,

between human science and Divine revelation. author of 'Philosophia Scripturse Interpres' had said. 'Every one is the best interpreter of his own words, and God, being the author of Philosophy, to Him is to be ascribed whatever interpretation is made of the Scripture by the maxims of Philosophy, and, consequently, that is to be owned as the rule of interpretation.' An able writer who published a reply to that work says, 'that God is the author of all true and sound philosophy, I grant,' . . . but, 'I must add, by way of limitation to this concession, that God is not so the author of Philosophy. as He is of the Scripture. He is so far the author of the Scripture, as that He hath infallibly directed His servants in penning its several parts, and preserved them from error in that work: but He is not so the author of Philosophy, as infallibly to direct any man in the world, so as not to err in his philosophy. Here, therefore, is a very great difference; and seeing that this philosophy (which we acknowledge, so far as it is sound and true, to be God's gift,) is nowhere to be found but in the minds or writings of fallible men, by what certain rule shall we judge of the maxims of philosophy in matters of religion, whether they be undoubtedly true or no? Or, which way shall we be assured that the aforesaid maxims (supposing them to be unquestionably true) are duly applied to the matter in controversy? Whither shall we go, in this case, to find out such solid satisfaction as may give sufficient ground for that Divine faith, that we certainly owe to the doctrine of Scripture?'

The same writer retorts the argument of his opponent in two ways: First, 'If because God is the author of

Philosophy, therefore Philosophy must unfold all the difficulties in Scripture, will it not as well follow that, seeing God is the unquestionable author of the Scriptures, therefore the Scriptures are to resolve all the difficulties in Philosophy?' and Secondly, 'If God be the best Interpreter of His own mind, then, doubtless, the best interpretation of His mind is to be fetched from that which is the only certain and undoubted record of His mind, and that is the Scripture.'—John Wilson, B.D., of Catherine Hall, Cambridge, The Scripture's Genuine Interpreter Asserted, p. 100, 102 (London, 1678).

#### NOTE H.

Professor Powell's presumptive argument against miracles is neither more nor less than Dr Strauss' fundamental assumption, which underlies his whole criticism of the 'Life of Jesus,'—that 'whatever is supernatural must needs be unhistorical.' Hence his mythical interpretation of the sacred narrative. His theory is equally opposed to the older Rationalism, which admitted the historical truth of the narrative, but ascribed every supposed miracle to natural causes; and the doctrine of Supernaturalism, which ascribes such events to extraordinary Divine interposition. It is expressly designed 'to substitute a new mode of considering the life of Jesus, in the place of the antiquated systems of Supernaturalism and Naturalism.'

Let the reader compare the following passages with Professor Powell's 'Essay,' and say whether the one be not the mere echo of the other. 'Our modern world. after many centuries of tedious research, has attained a conviction, that all things are linked together by a chain of causes and effects, which suffers no interruption . . . . This conviction is so much a habit of thought with the modern world that, in actual life, the belief in a supernatural manifestation, is at once attributed to ignorance or imposture.' 'That an account is not historical—that the matter related could not have taken place in the manner described, is evident, when the narration is irreconcilable with the known and universal laws which govern the course of events. Now, according to these laws, agreeing with all just philosophical conceptions and all credible experience, the absolute cause never disturbs the chain of secondary causes by single arbitrary acts of interposition, but rather manifests itself in the production of the aggregate of finite causalities, and of their reciprocal action. When, therefore, we meet with an account of certain phenomena, or events of which it is either expressly stated or implied that they were produced immediately by God Himself-(Divine apparitions, voice from heaven, and the like)-or by human beings possessed of supernatural powers—(miracles, prophecies)—such an account is in so far to be considered as not historical. And, inasmuch as, in general, the intermingling of the spiritual world with the human is found only in unauthentic records, and is irreconcilable with all just conceptions; so narratives of angels and devils, of their appearing in human shape, and interfering with human concerns, cannot possibly be received as historical. -STRAUSS' Life of Jesus, i., 71, 87.

#### NOTE I.

MANY writers have recently attempted to establish the claims of Christian truth on the ground of the apostolical succession of the bishops and clergy of the Church-a fact which Archbishop Whately assures us cannot be established with reference to the ministers of any Church in Christendom. 'The fallacy consists in confounding together the unbroken apostolical succession of a Christian ministry generally, and the same succession, in an unbroken line, of this or that individual minister. The existence of such an order of men as Christian ministers. continuously from the time of the Apostles to this day, is perhaps as complete a moral certainty as any historical fact can be :' . . . . 'but if each man's hope is made to rest on his receiving the Christian ordinances at the hands of a minister to whom the sacramental virtue that gives efficacy to those ordinances has been transmitted in unbroken succession from hand to hand, every thing must depend on that particular minister, and his claim is by no means established from our merely establishing the uninterrupted existence of such a class of men as Christian ministers. There is not a minister in all Christendom who is able to trace up, with any approach to certainty, his own spiritual pedigree.' . . . . 'The Church of England rests the claims of ministers, not on some supposed sacramental virtue, transmitted from hand to hand in unbroken succession from the Apostles, in a chain, of which if any one link be even doubtful, a distressing anxiety is thrown over all the ordinances, sacraments, and Church privileges for ever; but, on the fact of these ministers being the regularly appointed officers of

a regular Christian community.'—WHATELY on the Kingdom of Christ, p. 117, 180.

Instead of representing the apostolical commission as attaching to a successive ministry, it should rather be connected with the permanent writings of the Apostles. by means of which they are still, as it were, present with the Church, and speak with Divine authority both to ministers and people. Their office, as inspired messengers. did not terminate with their lives, but was perpetuated. in its world-wide and indefectible authority, as long as their words should continue to be read or heard. 'They being dead, yet speak,' and 'their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.' This was the ground on which the Reformers took their stand in vindicating their doctrine, discipline. and government, in opposition to the claims of what was called the Apostolical Sec; and our readers will find it admirably discussed in CLAUDE'S Historical Defence of the Reformation.

#### NOTE J.

It was one of the earliest calumnics against Christianity, that it rested on Faith, not on Reason. 'Quelques detracteurs ont dit que le Christianisme n'etait susceptible d'aucun raisonnement, ils ont supposé que ceux qui s'appellent du nom de Chrétiens fondent leur croyance sur une foi sans raison et sur un acquiescement sans examen, soutenant que nous ne pourrons donner aucune preuve claire de la vérité contenue dans nos promesses,

voulant que nos adeptes s'en tiennent à la foi seule, ce qui les fait surnomer fidèles, pour marquer une foi sans discernement et sans discussion.' . . . . 'Invoquons le Dieu de l'univers par l'intercession de notre Sauveur, son Verbe et notre souveraine Pontife, et justifions-nous de la première imputation qui nous est faite, en prouvant combien sont calomniateurs ceux qui ont avancé que nous ne pouvons donner aucune demonstration de notre croyance, et qu'elle repousse toute espèce de raisonnement.' 'Mais à quoi bon prolonger ces ébauches de démonstration que nous ne noussoummetton, pas à une foi aveugle, mais au contraire, à des convictions raisonnées et utiles qui embrassent toutes les données d'une piété sincère, puisque l'ouvrage que nous avons entrepris est spécialement consacré à traiter cette question dans son ensemble? Nous engugeons done, nous conjurons même les personnes capables de suivre une série de raisonnements, d'apporter quelque attention a ceux qu'il renferme, a fin de conserver dans leur esprit les preuves de nos dogmes, et de se préparer à les défendre contre tous ceux qui pourraient les questionner sur les motifs de notre esperance.'-Eusebii Preparatio Evangelica, by Seguier de Saint Brisson, i. p. 3, 6, 14.

## DOCUMENTS.

No. (1.)

THE 'ESSAYS AND REVIEWS.'

THE following letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury has been received by the Rev. W. R. Fremantle, of Haydon Rectory, in reply to an Address bearing upon the 'Essays and Roviews:'—

LAMBETH, Feb. 12.

REV. SIR,—I have taken the opportunity of meeting many of my Episcopal brethren in London, to lay your Address before them.

They unanimously agree with me in expressing the pain it has given them that any clergymen of our Church should have published such opinions as those concerning which you have addressed us.

We cannot understand how their opinions can be held consistently with an honest subscription to the formularies of our Church, with many of the fundamental doctrines of which they appear to us essentially at variance.

Whether the language in which these views are expressed is such as to make their publication an act which could be visited in the ecclesiastical courts, or to justify the synodical condemnation of the book which contains them, is still under our gravest consideration. But our main hope is our reliance on the blessing of God in the continued and increasing earnestness with which we trust that we and the clergy of our several dioceses may be enabled to teach and preach that good deposit of sound doctrine which our Church has received in its fulness, and which we pray that she may, through God's grace, ever set forth as the uncorrupted Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.—I remain, Rev. Sir, your faithful servant,

J. B. CANTUAR.

Rev. W. Fremantle.

#### APPENDIX.

I am authorized to append the following names:

C. J. EBOR.

R. D. HEREFORD.

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J. CHESTER.
A. LLANDAFF.

H. M. DUNELM.

R. J. BATH AND WELLS.

H. EXETER

J. LINCOLN.

C. Peterborough.

C. GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL.
W. SARIM

C. ST DAVID'S.
A. T. CHICHESTER.

R. RIPON.

J. LICHFIELD.

J. T. Norwich.

S. Oxon.

J. C. BANGOR.

T. ELY.

J. ROCHESTER.

T. V. ST ASAPH.

S. CARLISLE.

J. P. MANCHESTER.

### No. (2.)

THE IRISH ARCHBISHOPS ON THE 'ESSAYS AND REVIEWS.'

The Archbishops of Armagh and Dublin have addressed the following letter to the bishops of their provinces, with a view to its circulation amongst the clergy generally:—

RIGHT REV. BRETHREN,—Our attention has been called to a protest which has been issued by the prelates in England in reference to a publication entitled 'Essays and Reviews,' the production of professed members, most of them clergymen, of our Church, and yet setting forth views manifestly at variance with its principles. We cannot doubt your strong disapprobation of the disingenuousness of such conduct. Even supposing the doctrines of our Church to be as unsound as we firmly believe them to be the reverse, still it is directly opposed to the most -

obvious principles of morality for persons to continue professed members of the Church, and perhaps enjoying its emoluments, while assailing those doctrines. With respect to the publication in question, we have not hitherto deemed it necessary to take any public step. considering that the writers were in English dioceses. and that the respective diocesans would be likely to take such measures, either by ecclesiastical censure or otherwise, as the case might appear to them to call for; and we believe that it is but very recently that the matter has obtained any considerable notoriety in this portion of the Church. But now that this publication is obtaining much circulation, we feel it necessary to call your attention to it, with a view to your putting your clergy specially on their guard against the possible inroads of erroneous and strange doctrines in this new form. As to the best mode of your doing this, your own judgment and knowledge of the circumstances in each locality will be a sufficient guide. With earnest prayers for the Divine guidance to ourselves and to you in all matters, and more especially in this difficult conjuncture, we remain, Right Reverend Brethren, yours, etc.,

' J. G. Armagh.
' R. Dublin.'

No. (8.)

CONVOCATION OF THE PROVINCE OF CANTERBURY.

YESTERDAY MORNING both Houses of Convocation resumed business at Westminster—the Upper House, in Queen Anne's Bounty-office; and the Lower House, in the Jerusalem Chamber, adjoining the Abbey.

### Upper House.

The Archbishop of Canterbury presided; and there were present the Bishops of London, Winchester, Oxford St David's, Lincoln, Norwich, Salisbury, Gloucester and Bristol, Llandaff, and St Asaph.

#### THE 'ESSAYS AND REVIEWS.'

The Venerable Archdeacon BICKERSTETH, the acting prolocutor of the Lower House, who was accompanied by the Hon, and Rev. Dr Pellew, Dean of Norwich; the Rev. Canon Wordsworth, the Ven. Archdeacon Grant the Rev. Canon Woodgate, and other gentlemen, attended before their lordships, and stated that the Lower House having, on the preceding day, discussed the merits of the volume of 'Essays and Reviews,' written by Dr Temple Dr Williams, Mr Wilson, Mr Jowett, Mr Goodwin, Mi Baden Powell, and Mr Mark Pattison, had come to the following resolution:- 'That the clergy of the Lower House of Convocation of the Province of Canterbury having acreed to the unanimous censure which has been already pronounced and published by the archbishop and bishops of both provinces, on certain opinions contained in a book entitled "Essays and Reviews," entertain an earnest hope that, under the Divine blessing, the faithful zeal of the Christian Church may be enabled to counteract the pernicious influences of the erroneous opinions contained in the said volume.'

## No. (4.)

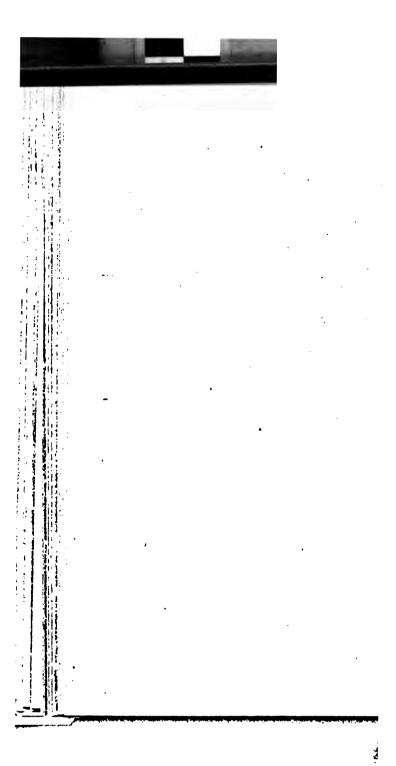
## CONVOCATION.

PROVINCE OF YORK .- THE LOWER HOUSE.

THE following resolutions were moved by the Rev. Dr M'Neile, seconded by Dr Goode, Dean of Ripon, supported by Archdeacon Jones, and agreed to,—

- 1. That this House desires to express its unfeigned satisfaction at the condemnation of a volume entitled 'Essays and Reviews,' pronounced by the Archbishop and Bishops of the Province, in concert with their Right Rev. Brethren of the Province of Canterbury.
- 2. That on one of the principles advocated in that volume, of making what is called the verifying faculty in man the test whereby he is to sit in eclectic judgment on the contents of the Bible-determining which are Divine and which human, which true and which false-we are of opinion, the fundamental and distinguishing truths of Christianity must, in all consistency, be rejected; seeing that the ever-blessed Trinity, the Holy Incarnation, and the Resurrection of the Body, are mysteries not to be received by any verifying faculty in man, but only in submission of mind to a reasonably attested revelation from God. And, therefore, we hold it a solemn duty-distinguishing between the evidence for a revelation of which man is fully capable of judging, and the contents of a revelation of many of which man may be wholly incompetent to judge—to record our utter rejection, nay, our unfeigned abhorrence of the principle referred to, as well as of other kindred principles characteristic of the volume.

FINIS.



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- 'A book at once for scholars, and a book for all thinking men.'—Christian Review, Baltimore.
- 'This work is emphatically a book for the times;—it is learned, ingenious, distinguished for largeness of conception as well as for logical acuteness; and it is convincing and impressive, because the author evidently reasons and writes in a spirit of believing earnestness.'—Londonderry Standard.

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